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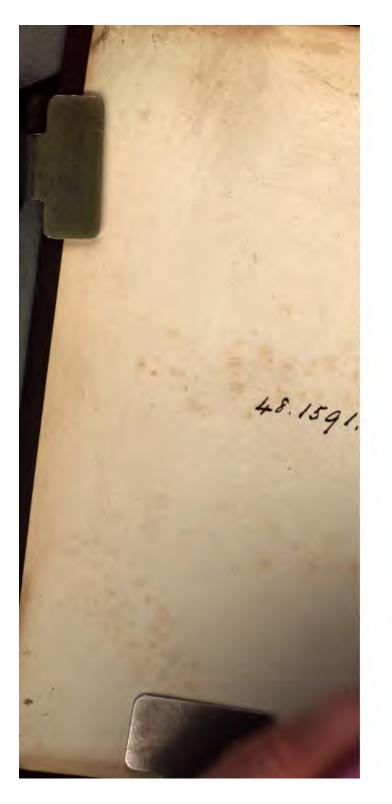
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SCEPTRE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS:

A SERMON

PREACHED BEFORE

THE MAYOR AND CORPORATION OF MAIDSTONE. .

IN THE

PARISH CHURCH OF ALL SAINTS,

ON THURSDAY, NOVEMBER NINTH, MDCCCXLVIII,

BEING THE DAY

APPOINTED FOR THE ELECTION OF MAYOR,

BY THE

REV. JOHN SPURGIN, M.A.,

HEAD MASTER OF MAIDSTONE GRAMMAR SCHOOL,
CHAPLAIN TO THE CORPORATION, AND LATE FELLOW OF
CLARE HALL, CAMBRIDSE.

Published by Bequest.

MAIDSTONE:

HALL AND SON; SMITH; WEST; WICKHAM AND SON.

LONDON:

RIVINGTONS; ST. PAUL'S CHURCH YARD, AND WATERLOO PLACE.

1848.

MAIDSTONE: W. WEST, PRINTER, BIGH STREET.

TO THE

WORSHIPFUL THE MAYOR, ALDERMEN, COUNCILLORS, AND OFFICERS

OF THE CORPORATION OF THE KING'S-TOWN

AND PARISH OF MAIDSTONE,

This Sermon,

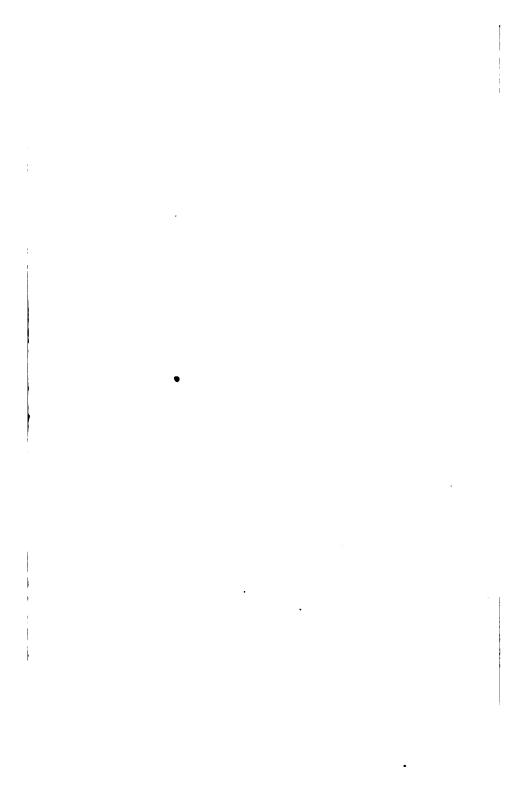
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IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,

BY TRRIR OBEDIENT PAITRFUL SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.





not be unseasonable, if we confine the short remaining portion of this morning's service to the contemplation of subjects, at once in keeping with the occasion of our meeting, and under God's blessing profitable to us, who are linked by closer associations than an ordinary congregation presents.

For what is the occasion that thus assembles us? It is not a mere Festival that summons us from our homes, and bids us lay aside our wonted callings, -Joyous and glad as the thought undoubtedly is, that in the Ministers of Justice we recognise the punishment of wickedness and vice, and the maintenance of true Religion and Virtue. It is not an appeal to your sympathies, for some cause of suffering humanity, or scheme of Missionary enterprise at home or abroad. But it is the Anniversary of your Civil year,—the Death-day of your past year—the Birth-day of your new year. And as at its beginning, by assembling in this House of Prayer, you acknowledged the only true source from which all blessing on your plans and deliberations could spring,-that God "from whom all holy desires, all good counsels, all just works do proceed," - even so now at its conclusion, you are not found unwilling as a Body to acknowledge that "honour due unto His name," who is the "Blessed and only Potentate," who is "far above all principality and power, and might and dominion, and every name, that is named not only in this world, but also in that which is to come"-whose delegates all Civil authorities are-whose "Throne endureth for ever and

ever, and the Sceptre of whose kingdom is a right Sceptre."

Whilst then we are willing, and rightly willing, as loyal subjects to render due submission and allegiance to "the Queen and all that are in authority under her," and to respect the Civil Magistrate and his Tribunal as the Executive of Justice; it is no less our duty as subjects and citizens, than the Sovereign's on the Throne, and the Magistrate's on the Bench, to remember, that the Supreme Governour of the World, the Chief Ruler in the Universe, is our Blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Hence He is addressed by the Father in the triumphant language of the Psalm, as the Royal Bridegroom that filleth His throne with judgement, and decketh His court with splendour. And Saint Paul appropriates the very words unto Christ, when he tells the Hebrews that "unto the Son He saith, 'Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of Thy kingdom,—Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."

Now various are the aspects under which the Redeemer is represented to us in the Bible. We view Him as our Mediator, as our Advocate, as our Intercessor. As our Mediator, He hath stepped in, and "made both one," reconciling the Father unto us, and us unto the Father. As our "Advocate with the Father," He appears, as "Jesus Christ the Righteous," blotting out the hand-writing of ordinances that was

against us." As our Intercessor, He hath entered into the Courts of Heaven, and there exhibits those wounds, and pleads the merit of those sufferings, which He experienced "for us men and for our Salvation." And then it is that mercy triumphs, and sin and Hell are confounded, at the voice of one who is "able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by Him, seeing that He ever liveth to make intercession for them." We view Him too as our Prophet, ever ready to teach and instruct His people, in all ages of His Church, by His Word, and by His Spirit.—Consecrated He was even before His Birth, by the assurance of the Angel to His Mother, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon Thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow Thee,"-and confirmed in His Divine Mission, by the cleavage of the Heavens at His Baptism, by the visible descent of the Holv Ghost upon Him, and by the voice of the Father proclaiming to men and Angels, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased"! We view him as a Priest-yea a great High Priest-who hath once for all entered into the Holy of Holies, having offered up Himself a perfect sacrifice and oblation for sin; And "who needeth not daily, as the Jewish High Priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for His own sins, and then for the People's; for this He did once, when He offered up Himself."

But there is another, and yet more exalted character, in which the Redeemer is constantly represented in both the Old and New Testaments,—it is His

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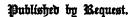
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of Imperial Rome, when pressed with the question of the Governour "Art thou a King then?"-replied with the language of assurance, "Thou sayest that I am a King. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness of the truth." This was He whose Royalty was scornfully acknowledged by the Legend of the Cross, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews"!--And having suffered upon that Cross as a Malefactor, having yielded to the King of Terrors, that "through death, He might destroy him that hath the power of death,"-vet even in His expiring struggle giving proof of his power as King, by the rending of the vail, and the tearing of the rocks, and the quaking of the earth, and the rifling of the graves,-He rose triumphant as a King, and having "ascended on high, leading captivity captive," "Spoiling principalities and powers," He now sitteth as a King, at the right Hand of Majesty on High, "Angels and authorities, and Powers being made subject unto Him "-"Whose throne is for ever and ever; -The Sceptre of whose Kingdom is a right Sceptre."

"Thou art the King of Glory O Christ!" This Sovereignty He has by right of *Creation*. For "by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers,"—He is a King also by right of *Redemption*. For by vailing the God-head in Human form, and dying for us, He broke in sunder the Fetters of sin and unbelief

in which every Son of Adam was trammelled, and emancipated him from the galling voke of tyranny, into the "Glorious liberty of the Children of God."-And at His Resurrection and Ascension, the Redeemer entered upon the full plentitude of His kingdom; until as a King, He shall again appear "sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the Clouds of Heaven." Then shall He come as a Mighty Conqueror to claim the full rewards of Victory—The Powers of Hell shall be cast down -Sin and darkness scattered-Death abolished, and life and Immortality brought to light—and "The Lord alone shall be exalted in that day." Time shall set no limit to His Empire,—For "His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him." And He that is the plague of death, and the grave's destruction, shall reign, till "He hath put all enemies under His feet,"- when circling years have ceased their course, and nought shall be heard, save the Archangel's voice chaunting through the Universe the praises of that King, whose "Throne is for ever and ever,-The Sceptre of whose kingdom is a right Sceptre."

And why have we been thus urgent in bringing before your consideration the Kingly Character of the Redeemer?—It is, that by reminding you of our accountability as subjects to Him, we may be led to form a right estimate of our duties, and of that service in which we are engaged both nationally and individually. And this is a point we are all too apt to

banish from our breasts, whether we be Rulers or the ruled. We view ourselves simply with reference to our fellow-subjects of the King of Kings; and if our consciences condemn us not of perfidy to them, we lull ourselves into the pleasing satisfaction of faithful allegiance, and dutiful subjection. Nor is our verdict singular-For the fair Fame of Loyalty to our Earthly Sovereign, Love of Country, Obedience to the Laws, serves only to bolster up our own erroneous conception. And whence this fallacy ?-It is, because the world judges of us by the same partial Jury by which we acquitted ourselves. But "that which is highly esteemed among men, is abomination in the sight of God." Away then with our own ideal Tribunal! Away with the standard of our own imaginations! As Citizens of a Heavenly Country our true Loyalty will have to be tested by the Statute-Book of Him "who is the Great King over all the Earth,"whose Throne is Heaven, and whose footstool Earth, and "the Sceptre of whose Kingdom is a right Sceptre.'

This then brings us to the issue of the point;—If the Sceptre of the Kingdom, be a right Sceptre, "Righteousness" must be the watch-word of the Subject. This is the balance by which our allegiance must be weighed;—"Them that honour me, (saith our King,) I will honour; but they that despise me, shall be lightly esteemed."—And how truthful a fulfilment of this Promise, has the last year witnessed. Have we not seen in other countries Superstition and Infidelity,—those twin sisters of Divine displeasure, and

co-partners in Human operation,—labouring, and too successfully, with gigantic efforts in the cause of Rebellion and Disorder ?-Bear witness ye shores of France and verdant pastures of Ireland! And have we not seen the sympathetic struggle made in the Metropolis and other parts of our own Country,—but made, thank God! only to shew the vanity of the attempt, and the Loyalty which pervades the hearts of Englishmen, from the highest to the lowest? And why was it, that in our case, Order soon righted itself into equilibrium, whilst in the case of other nations, little short of the Reign of Terror has succeeded? "How is it, (asks the leading journal of the day) that whilst Berlin and Vienna, the two principal Towns of a population of 40 millions, who have attained no mean eminence in war, in science, and in literature, are trembling on the verge of another conflict, in which father and son, brother and brother, will stand arrayed against each other in hostile ranks; and Paris, too, is threatened with renewal of scenes we would fain expunge from the records of History, that London continues unshaken by the universal tumult?"*

In vain may worldly speculators assay to explain the Phenomenon, or Masters in Civil Politics to unravel the Problem. But we turn to the Bible, and there find that it is "Righteousness which exalteth a Nation, but sin is a reproach to any People." We have, alas! too little claim to the title of a Righteous People; and I doubt not, that were righteousness more

^{*} Times, Leading Article October 27, 1848.

cherished among us, a yet higher degree of exaltation would attend our country. But despite our national depravity, and individual sinfulness, we do maintain relatively the semblance of Righteousness. We have still a National Church, in which the rulers and the ruled meet upon the same level in the sight of their Heavenly King. Our Sabbaths are not avowedly abandoned to every kind of revelry and unhallowed amusement. Our Sovereign sets an example to her subjects, far more cogent in its influence than any penal enactment.—The great Council of the nation, acknowledges daily its dependence upon Him, who is the only Wise and True Counsellor. -The Judges of Assize, by their attendance in this Church, seek first the guidance and direction of Him, who is the Judge of all the Earth,-" who with righteousness shall judge the world; and the people with equity."—And to come still nearer home, in your Corporate presence here this day, as the Municipal Authorities of this Town, you implore His continued protection of yourselves, and your Fellow-townsmen; assured that "except the Lord keep the City, the the watchman waketh but in vain."

This then is the Vital Principle by which rebellion must be warded off, and insurrection crushed. Let us gather round this Sceptre; and cling to it with yet greater tenacity—Let us not be deceived by the frantic cry of unhallowed Enthusiam.—Let us hold fast the "Liberty, with which Christ has made us free;"
—We need no other;—Our National Anthem tells us,

"Britons never will be Slaves"-Let us rid ourselves of the Slavery of Sin and Satan-Else we shall be shouting Liberty with the lips, whilst Despotism is festering within. Then shall we need no planting of Trees of Liberty in our Squares and our Parks, if the Liberty of the Gospel be planted in our hearts, and blossom there!-We too have a "Fraternity,"-Ave, a closer and more endearing tie than mere earthly relationship. -Ours is a "Fraternity," not fictitiously kept up by the sound of the Musket, or the Bayonet's point; -but bound and cemented by the living cords of Christianity—" For we ourselves are taught of God," to "love as Brethren."-Our "Equality," consists not in the subversion of all order, to effect the fancied level of all ranks-but is an Equality in the eyes of Him, who is "no respecter of persons,"-Who views us as children of the same common Parent,—redeemed by the same Saviour's blood, -and that Redeemer, our Elder Brother. Oh! may these Gospel Graces shine forth more and more brightly in us, till they irradiate not only this country, but all lands. Then "shall the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ"! Then shall we substantially realise that true "Liberty, Fraternity, and Equality," of which others talk so much, but know so little!—Then shall we be meet inhabitants of that Heavenly kingdom—the Jerusalem that is above—"the city that hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God!"-Then shall

we be admitted as faithful servants "into the joy of our Lord;" and, through the never-ending ages of a countless Eternity, shall reign with that King, whose "Throne is for ever and ever—the Sceptre of whose kingdom is a right Sceptre"!

O God, the protector of all that trust in Thee, without Whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy; Increase and Multiply upon us Thy Mercy, that Thou being our Ruler and Guide, we may so pass through things temporal, that we finally lose not the things eternal: Grant this, O heavenly Father, for Jesus Christ's sake our Lord. Amen.

THE END.

WEST, Printer, 13, High Street, Maidstone.

GOD'S ORACLE TO HIS CHURCH IN PASSING EVENTS:

A DISCOURSE

DELIVERED IN LIVERPOOL,

ON SUNDAY, APRIL 16TH, 1848, .

BY

THE REV. G. STEWARD,

AND PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.

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SERMON.

PSALM xlvi. 10.

"BE STILL, AND KNOW THAT I AM GOD: I WILL BE EXALTED AMONG THE HEATHEN, I WILL BE EXALTED IN THE EARTH."

The lessons taught us in this psalm are brief, but weighty. They are chiefly these—the stability and security of the church under the covenanted tutelage of Almighty God, contrasted with the fluctuations and restlessness of the surrounding world, changing in its social and national appearances—one wide theatre of convulsion and overthrow, likened to the wild and frantic sea, when tempest-wrought, or to the solid earth when torn with inward throes, and uplifted by volcanic forces from its quiet bed; even its massive mountains are uprooted, and hurled as avalanches into the abyss of angry waters. imagery, so bold and sublime, is expressly used to represent to us the condition of nations in times extraordinarily "The heathen raged, the kingdoms were eventful. moved." Again, the scenes of belligerent nations rise before us; the bow, the spear, the chariot, the whole array and panoply of mighty hosts eager for the contest,

and flushed with hopes of victory, stand before us; their masses drawn out in lurid pomp, their compact and solid phalanxes, their intrepid mien, their shouts of defiance; man intermingled with man, foot with foot,-while death riots in this field of blood, as the genius of the scene, high upon his "pale horse," and hell follows him. The presence and the sovereignty of God are in this instance brought out with great effect. He utters his voice only. in dread rebuke, and the earth melts beneath the avenging oracle. He is beheld above the huge hosts of combatants in the gory field. He is higher than any of the legendary divinities, whom poets of old fabulously enthroned as guardians of states, or the lords of battle. "He breaks the bow, and cuts the spear in sunder, and burns the chariot in the fire." His desolations are beheld in the scourge of wide wasting wars, in the issues of all tumultuous action, in the dissolution of polities, and the shifting apportionment of earth's territories amongst its various races—the preponderance of some and the debasement of others, as Egypt, to be exalted no more in the rank of nations. "Come, behold the works of the Lord."

The application of religious principles to public events is the duty here commanded; by the sudden and wonder-working efficacy of causes usually regular, however potent, sweeping on in a career of change and desolation with unchecked fury, like the earthquake, or the storm, before which all nature bows and staggers, as if her mighty pillars were yielding to the blows of an unseen hand, quivering and agonized, as in her very mortal throes, the types and precursors of the last dread day of God.

To this duty Christian people are now summoned, by more than a trumpet's blast. The sounds of the ocean's waves wax louder, and louder, in our ears. The waters of many people lift up their voice—" the mountains shake with the swelling thereof." The earthquake repeats its shocks, till a whole continent reverberates with its force. Mountains, in the forms of thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers, are rocked on their basements, or are hurled from their eminency, to be lost in the waterfloods of popular anarchy. The long truce of the destructive elements has been portentously broken, and their momentum seems to be proportionate to the time and profundity in which they have slept. It seems, as if a more than thirty years deep peace, was but the gathering of the demon energies of war, and for the accumulation of resources, which would triumph in an instant, when once called into action. No living man, nor even one of the generations already gathered to their fathers, has witnessed events, with their forecasting shadows, bearing any parallel with those, ushered in by a few brief weeks of the current year. Wars, and rumours of wars, on a scale ever so extended, or in characters of the tragic ever so terrible, were material and vulgar concerns, surface irruptions on society, and involving only surface interests. compared with these. The whole spirit of society is revolutionized, and its framework dashed to pieces, by forces long collecting, but instantly summoned to do their work. It is, as if a whole continental territory had suddenly shifted place under the feet of its nations, or a new conformation, agreeably to geological speculations, were being superinduced upon the sunk strata of the old. It looks just now, as if the world were waking from long oblivion, to some newly discovered objects, or modes of being, entering, as with a sudden birth pang, on some fresh career of life—as one possessing powers, of which he had yet to learn the use—a capacity to translate himself into some vacant portion of the universe, or to expatiate in his old abode, as if but newly born. Venerable institutions, such as time had made hoary and honourable, are disdained, as the baubles of childhood, the appendages of the nursery. Kings are cast down, as the mighty from their seats. Crowns perish as garlands in the grasp of popular fury; or, if spared, only survive as fiefs from the sovreignty of the people. Order ceases in uproar, Law cannot be overheard, amidst the din and bray of civil discord, while Justice seems about to drop both her balances and her sword together. The gradations of society fast disappear, and the foundations of the social structure are in no small danger of being overturned, and ploughed up. The vast social mass, is with comparative exceptions, in a state of fusion, everywhere prepared to take new moulds, and to be recast, and consolidated, by the hand of time, and the will of man. We do indeed now behold, "what desolations he hath made in the earth." The work of ages has been done in a day—the chaotic state marvellously induced, as the conclusion of unnumbered social epochs—and the rudiments of a new political creation are prepared, in the confluence of the mightiest elements of mind contained in the whole wide world. It is Europe that gives law and destiny to the world. Asia is decrepit, America is in her childhood, Africa in savagism. Europe is in full age, her civilization is normal to the entire planet, her tribes are the masters of entire humanity. All of worth contained in the residue, is a derivation of her greatness, a redundancy of her plenitude, a reflection of her glory. Her arts, and arms, her literature, philosophy, commerce, enterprize, are the treasury of the globe. Her sons bear sway in all lands. Her ships whiten every sea, and swell in every gale. It is Europe, that colonizes the waste, peoples solitude, multiplies cities, and pours the tide of social energy to the ends of the earth. The regeneration

of the whole world of man, seems to have been confided to her alone, who in addition to all her natural endowments, and fruit of culture, possesses the *Bible*, and the *Church*,—the truth, and its herald, the germs of all civil perfection, and the "incorruptible seed;" "the kingdom which cannot be moved," when all things are shaken, and in which all nations as "of one blood," have the same fraternal rights of inheritance.

The words of the text, are the only ones in the Psalm, put forth as immediately the Voice of God, and they stand out from the body of the Psalm, as the great oracle of instruction addressed to the church. They express the will of God as to the mood and direction of its mind, in seasons of public agitation and of fearful portent. "Be still!" whatever dispositions may prevail around—however the mind of the world may be tossed to and fro—incapable of, or disinclined, to dispassionate reflection—the sport alternately of hope and fear—awed by the sounds of tumultuous collision—distracted with the number of public occurrences so rapidly announced—inflamed by debates, governed by party interests, or blinded by party exasperations—one duty is prescribed to the disciples of revelation—"Be still!"

The command is issued by the great Author of all these complicated and astounding movements, while the boon promised, is inclusive of every wish of piety, and is summed up in the simple conviction, all perfect, and satisfying, that he alone is God, who thus speaks to us—that in the full assurance of this great truth, we possess a guarantee for a wise ordination, and glorious issue of all events—that they all tend to, and terminate in, the sole consummation which wisdom can desire, or God himself intend, viz: that He should be "exalted in the earth."

(1.) The condition of mind enjoined upon the church by this solemn oracle is to be explained. Stillness is con-

trasted with the fluctuation, and excitement of worldly passion, the whirl and eddyings of minds not calmed and balanced by religion. It implies a tranquility favourable to reflection, and is akin to that patience of which our Lord speaks, by which christians are made to possess their souls, to enjoy a perfect self mastery, the command of every faculty, with the use of every principle acquired in earlier times, and under quiet and ordinary influences. principle is then to be awakened into full and governing action. As a plant, it is then to bear its fruit, as heavenly wisdom, it is then to whisper counsel, and to direct pursuit. It is as discipline and courage in the soldier, prompting him in the day of battle—as talents and virtue in a citizen brought forth into the arena of public action, and consecrated to the service of one's country, in a crisis of its affairs. The stillness here commanded, reigns within the heart, while thunders roar without, "men's hearts failing them for fear," "looking after those things which are coming on the earth." Such is the privilege of piety. It is rest, amidst catastrophe-peace, amidst dissolving worlds. 'Tis to the soul, what the ark was to the favoured family, when the waters rose above the mountains; or, the blood of the passover on the thresholds and lintels of Israel, in the night so fatal to Egypt's first-born. It is a foundation which no agitations can shake, a palladium inviolable to all aggression. The religious temper, so serene and heavenly, is the true result of wisdom's rule, all harmonious, poising souls on eternal truth, breathing into them her fulness of life, and thus making them strong, either to suffer, or to act-calm, yet piercing to survey-to keep watch over events, while garrisoned by peace, as with a general's eye, which roams o'er the field of conflicting hosts, dealing out upon each other carnage and destruction. It gives more than the loftiness of the philosopher; it is as the light of

an angel's soul, whose intellect and moral, are but one power of deep, flowing, tranquil life—the reflection of the immutability of God. Never the slave of fear, or blind to the impulsions of passion, its liberty is more precious as terror multiplies its phantoms, and destruction hurls its darts around. The voice that cries, "Be still!" is sovereign over the heart that hears it. Aloft, o'er every other sound from above, or beneath. God stands as the shepherd who guards his flock, or as the eagle brooding over its young. He who put Moses into the cleft rock, is descried as the ever present guardian of His church. "The Lord of hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge."

(2.) "Be still." This is declarative of intense interest. It implies the arrested attention of the mind upon the career of providence. We are to be deeply interested—to be all eye, and all ear. As the tents of Israel were to be struck, when the cloud was taken up, and the trumpet blast was to be waited for, as the signal for an immediate march, so are the minds of christians to be turned toward. the more visible and wonderful footsteps of providence in the affairs of nations, and the changes of human society. The more regular and quiet order of his government generally passes on, and men sleep to the impressions of the presence and agency of the one Governor of the earth. His tread is so gentle and measured that it fails to be heard. His voice is so ordinate and soft, that the ear becomes dull and listless to its holy sounds; but His preparations advance incessantly toward some grand and startling crisis, some mighty series of events, which take the world, and the church too, by surprise. The lovely and the tranquil give place to the turbulent and the dreadful. Hidden powers in society burst at once into almost supernatural action. The deluge and the earthquake warn us how mighty are the magazines laid up for the world's destruction, and social

convulsions, in like manner, how near at hand, even in the bosoms of our fellow men, are provided all the resources necessary for the accomplishment of God's most terrible works. Even under common aspects, and the usual progress of human development, the nations of our race offer a vast spectacle to contemplation. The identity and unity of universal man is a grand fact. It is the spring of our sympathy with the whole history and prospects of the world. The characters of bygone generations are reflected in ourselves, while ours will survive in the characters and fortunes of posterity. The linkage of the law remains unbroken which binds the first and the last of men together, rendering the living man, wherever found, the representative of the entire past, and in some sense, the guardian of the future's weal. Transmission is the only prerogative of a transient being, not possession. Introduction and departure, conjunction and separation, affinities and repulsions, are the constituents of our lot; but the brevity of our stay in the world presents a contrast with the width of our sympathies, and the intensity of our interest in its affairs. Patriotism stirs its fires-our country is our home—the fortunes of posterity are meditated as blended in the political and religious position of the world, when we have left it. Humanity is the vast circle which philanthropy and religion fill with their benignant eye. what is the course of the world tending? Is it progressive or otherwise? What are the existing aspects of providence most prominent? Where are the footsteps of Deity most visible in the deepening shades, or marked as on the faithless sands, or the oblivious waves? What nations are now advanced to the front of the world's theatre? What are their separate peculiarities, or for what designs are they raised up to this rank of eminence? For judgment or for mercy? Whether to plough the waste, or to sow the seed?

To prepare the way, or to bear the nobler office of revealing the glory of the Lord? To be as the Assyrian, the rod of His anger, or as Jerusalem, the light of the Gentiles, to bear His salvation to the ends of the earth? Political studies by religious minds are fraught with equal interest and improvement. They are not, what a drivelling piety would insinuate, the mountain to which Satan would conduct us, but to which the Spirit leads us in the visions of God. We there, as Balaam beheld Israel from the mountains of Moab, see the kingdoms of the world, and their glory, and may there too, catch the spirit of prophecy, and bless. or curse them from thence. From thence we behold the star of Jacob, rising o'er the dark and agitated scenes beneath, like pity bending o'er the bed of death; vet, the harbinger of heavenly grace, soon to fill the world with bridal joys. "Be still!" when all around is whirling motionconfusion-ruin-when woes drop from the mouths of angel's trumpets-each successive blast big with heavier vengeance. All heaven is silent when they prepare to sound. It can antidate events—see them in their causes—interpret omens without failure—in beginnings, forestall conclusions. We are brought to silence by the sounds themselves. We are to pick the pearls of our wisdom, from the depths of the troubled sea-to interpret dreams, in their accomplishment -to read the labelled chariot, while moving at the full speed of its wheels-or to catch the ghostly hand, as it casts its mystic letters loosely upon the walls of palaces, and the monumental pride of empires, consigning them all to dust and shade. "Be still!" because profoundly stirred motionless as a statue, facing the brightest sunshine, and the deepest shadows of the night alike—a fixed intelligence, adjusted by heaven's own hand,-piety on high in her observatory, aloof from fogs and clouds, with her eye so strong and steady, as to behold all things in God, and to

detect the course of his Spirit, in the world's concerns, when those beneath, hear only the noise of the wings of His hosts, and the sounds of the dreadful wheels of His chariot, crushing beneath them all human glory-or are blinded by the dust they raise of falling and fallen kingdoms. "Be still!" as the hermit in his cave, though the great gulph of foaming waters lie just at his feet. "Be still!" as the great mathematician, who concentrated himself on his problem, till Syracuse was stormed, and the Roman sword was buried in his own bosom. "Be still!" as they who closely compacted, a mighty host, upon the Red Sea shore, awaited the uplifting of the all-sovereign rod o'er its floodand the work which should show Jehovah's love and power, in the high way, walled by its waters, and paved by its adamant—where mercy and judgment held alternate sway and were blended in the strains of the same eternal song.

(3.) "Be still!" This is the mood of faith, in full dominion. It swells into triumph in the first notes of the Psalm, "God is our refuge and strength." "Be still!" because secure. Nature thus is philosophy. All jeopardy appeals to the instinct of fear. It summons all the resources of man for his relief, and as "deep calling unto deep," utters its loud cry to heaven for help. Not to fear, is alike the property of the fool, and of the sage—of the stoicism which makes a friend of necessity, and of the saint who puts his trust in God. "Be still!" for the church is safe, whatever befalls the world. The city of God posted on its own rock cannot be moved, though heaven and earth pass away. Its river glides calmly along the sacred vale, where she lies hidden from the world, and sheltered from the Its fountain is God's throne—its streams are His Spirit—its draughts, life. Its course is not gorged by the fall of mountains, nor its waters drained off through the fissures of the earthquake. Earth's troubles never lash it into waves, nor its maddened tides pollute its limpid streams. This is *God's heritage*—and the name of the city is exponent of its safety, and its renown, "Jehovah Shammah," the Lord is there.

"Be still." Such is the fiat of grace—such the It is the fruit of knowing that He work of faith. is God, and the qualification for deeper discoveries of the same all comprising truth. The hurry and restlessness of fear bespeak the absence, or the littleness of faith, as Israel, who, when beholding the frowning legions of his foes, like lions roaring for their prey, forgat the wonders of the land of Ham, basely quailing before an arm of flesh; or, as Peter, who saw the threatening waves, rather than Him who walked upon them, and bade him "come." Stillness reigns when Omnipotence is looked upon, and feeble, helpless man as breasted over with its shield. while his canopy is the cloud, infolding both the glories of vengeance and of grace. Faith, like its Author and Finisher, dwells on high, its divinity and its temple are, as those of the prophetic vision, "lifted up." Its foundation is deeper than the universe. Its range is the Infinite. It grasps the Nature which gives substance and agency to every other. It unites us with Christ, and thus grounds us on the Divinity. It unfolds to us a Father, and brings royal honours and treasures from above. To faith are secrets whispered, and mysteries opened—it holds cabinet privileges, as Abraham, "the friend of God." The course of the world is by the power of the Cross-and redemption's policy is everywhere, and in all things, paramount.

(4.) "Be still!" This is a precept for patient, painstaking application of mind to the interpretation of public events. It is contrary to haste in forming opinions, and settling conclusions. It is as remote from the scepticism, dark and negative, which believes nothing, lest it should believe too

much; as from a blind, impetuous, dogmatizing fanaticism which claims for itself the infalibility of an oracle. stillness is a divinely humble, a truly philosophic temper, which observes accurately, collates extensively, and studies profoundly, the doctrine and language of facts. It is deep in the knowledge of man; deeper yet, in the knowledge of God. It has understanding in the visions of God, as unfolded by His providence, as well as by his Spirit. dreams of Pharoah, the fortunes of Egypt, were revealed to Joseph; not to the princes of Zoan, or the priests of the The visions of Nebuchadnezzar and of his successor, could not the wise men of Babylon interpret; but the thing was made known unto Daniel. This is certain, both from the testimony of Scripture, and of reason, that the principles of God's providence are unchangeable; and, that they are in universal operation, whether they can be The application of these principles. detected, or not. though clearly taught us, may be a difficult, and in many, instances, an impossible task, both from the extreme circumscription of our knowledge, and their involved connections, both with the past and future. Their very unity and comprehensiveness renders them, to use apostolic language, "unsearchable judgments," and, "ways past finding out." This fact is in fine keeping with the characters of prophecy, which are as true to the course of nature, and the methods of providence, as both are to the character of their glorious Author. Obscurity is in both the chief feature. "Clouds and darkness are round about Him." Full and lucid views are not given; partial light only is afforded—breaks now and then-glimpses of the face, and the chariot of Him, who rides on the heavens-intimations significantly dropped at intervals—oracles silent as those sent forth by the firmament—whose "line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world"-speaking to all ears.

though heard only by a few. Prophecy doubtless teaches much, but conceals more. It lays before us a grand outline of government, but seldom regards details, or sheds light upon particular eras, or events. It hardly does more than give us results; dropping agencies, with their relations to time and place. It is like a picture, which composed of objects variously grouped, and of lights and shades artistically proportioned, is comprised within a few feet of canvass, though an entire district is brought under the range of the eye. Yet, is not the knowledge obtained from this source less valuable, because imperfect. The providence of individual life is overhung with the same obscurity, but with sufficient manifestation, to assure us of its reality, and to support faith in the perfect wisdom and goodness which govern our entire lot. But in order to an acquisition so enriching and delightful, a profoundly humble and prayerful intelligence is to be cultivated. Events have in them an inspiration, which only "holy men of God" can receive. The breath borne by the four winds of heaven, whether they come upon the broad valley of death to raise all into life; or whether they strive together upon the face of the deep, to evoke from it monster forms, to waste and depopulate the earth, animates only a prophet's soul, and a prophet's eye-or the wonder passes as an eclipse overspread with a cloud—the church loses a lesson—God a testimony—and the world a blessing.

The point to be reached by the process of a calm, contemplative piety, is not that of entire illumination, on the workings of providence, in the production and issues of great public events. It is otherwise stated in the text. "Be still, and know that I am God." This is the grand climactric science—the great light, on which the eye should settle, when darkness broods around. It is as a beacon fire blazing from a distant mountain top, at midnight; a sure

signal, a true, though stationary guide; rendering the arch and circle of darkness, even more visible than before-or as remote worlds, sending to us their light, as certificates of their being; but reserving to themselves the secrets of their magnitudes, elements, constituent arrangements, and forms of life. We are in truth, more concerned to know what God is, than what He does—to understand His character, than to scan His work—to grasp principles firmly, than to trace his government in particular instances—much less to philosophize on the whole system. "Be still, and know Such is at once our greatest duty, and that I am God!" our noblest privilege. It is the first and the last lesson to be presented to us, and all other finite beings—the sublime intellectual and moral thesis, on which all faculty must be concentrated; and which includes the substance and orderly development of all truth. It utters an awful condemnation both of atheism and idolatry. The one denies His essence, the other his attributes—the one annihilates his being, the other his glory—the one blasphemously worships nature in the abstract, the other the representatives of its powers, whether imaginary, or palpable. Both equally disallow the doctrine of the text, which the ancient church, whether patriarchal or Jewish, was designed to witness to the world. and the christian church, in the full orbed glory of the Three One Name. "Be still, and know that I am God." Thus a personal Deity is set forth—who uses personal language, as of man to man. Individuality and infinity may be equally predicated of Him. "I am that I am." Such is the basis of our revelation—such the instructive suggestion, and faith of our very nature. We can form no idea of mind without personality, any more than of intelligence without a thinking substance—and doubtless, this is one property of the image of God, identified with the very existence of mind, whether embodied, or not. It is the key of knowledge put in our own bosoms, enabling us to open the Divine nature by its resemblance to our own. It is the common sense of religion, which, whatever philosophy contradicts, is "science falsely so called," to be refused, as being a pernicious, as well as a "vain deceit." It belies God's voice in our own bosoms—the language of the Bible, and the inspiration of the Spirit, speaking in man, as well as to man. Personal terms, and pantheistic notions, are in direct repugnance to each other. For how can he who uses such language as this, "know that I am God," be supposed to include all being whatsoever in Himself? If he represent universal nature, to whom or what else could divinity be ascribed? where could a rival of His honour be found? Or how could religion, and irreligion be distinguishedthe one approved, and the other condemned? A lie so monstrous must procreate a whole progeny of mischiefs. The doctrine of creation must be given up—that of providence is lost—prayer becomes an absurdity—religion itself a mere sentiment, or superstition. Morals have only a subjective existence, because no moral government really obtains; while conscience must become defunct, or degenerate into a feeble, precarious, and anomolous instinct. There is no Authority to prescribe duty, and to uphold obligation; and rewards and punishments are alike chimeras of the "Be still, and know that I am God." This inbrain. cludes the knowledge of his nature, as one of infinite excellency, as it is an unoriginated essence, eternally antecedent to, and independent of, all other being. The proper idea of God, is that of simple, self-existence—an existence therefore necessary, not as inferred from some antecedent ground; (for such a supposition is excluded) but arising from its own self; and from the truth, that if some being were not eternal; nothing could have been at all,—that "without Him" there could have been "nothing made that was made."

His is therefore a boundless plenitude of life, (for that which has no cause but itself, cannot be circumscribed). Its essence is unmixed—unchangeable—alike incapable of increase or deterioration—of development or diffusion—for this would imply a relative, not an absolute perfection. He is God, who thus stands immeasurably above, as He is eternally before all being besides. Creation is properly His production, not His being-not His essence, any more than it is His person. The doctrine of design is everywhere paramount—power is everywhere proclaimed by it and science is chiefly valuable, as opening these doctrines more surprisingly, and multiplying illustrations of them indefinitely. Creation admitted, is God manifested. testimony is to Him alone—it bears no witness to itself, but to another, and a greater. It shadows forth his immensity, and immutability-His omnipotency and wisdom are written on all things. His Name is engraven deeply in the essence, properties, and final causes of the creation-it is impossible to expunge, or to mutilate it. Jehovah's incommunicable name is stamped upon every thing, whether great or small-a system, a planet, a man, a mote, a sand grain—all bear upon them one grand and sacred signature from His Almighty hand; yet never shewing us the fulness of the inscription—the very bottom of the character. only a sign standing for infinity-a sensible symbol of unsearchable mysteries of skill-a surface wonder, hiding fathomless depths of greater ones-a first envelope, swathing up a countless series—the first leaf of the great volume of nature, which none but its own Author can fully understand and display. Hence, the true effect of science is to indoctrinate us in our ignorance; and the discipline which perfects greatness in its empire, is that which religion demands to our being great in the Kingdom of Heaven—that we "become as little children."

The great Teacher is, in this instance, the copyist of His own works, for each speaks to us in parables. The process is from something known, to something unknown. is the type and shadow of some more remote and glorious truth. Thus is the doctrine of God's infinity propounded to us, in the character of his works. He has set lessons to all intelligence, which for number, and difficulty, must demand eternity to master, and, (were it not a contradiction) would exhaust it, in the immensity of the contemplation -How much more then, Himself? "Who by searching can find out God," or "know the Almighty to perfection?" Again, to be God, is to preserve and to govern—to measure out all times and seasons—to assign the powers, and limit the agencies of all creatures whatsoever,-to bid worlds run their races—suns to dart their splendour—and order to abide sovereign over the universe. Years, months, days, hours, silently revolve to His timekeeping, who never slumbers; and to whom a thousand ages, and a single instant, issue with the same marked precision. He counts them all, who counts the hairs of our heads; who overlooks not one solitary sparrow, much less one man. The sands and dew drops do not exceed His knowledge—the grass which every spring shows as a new creation—buds, leaves, and flowers, flung over the world's width and breadth by a hand unseen-all for grace and usefulness-while life teems afresh from its every matrix, and smiles defiance upon death. He is God, who presides in similar, yet higher glory, over the moral universe—the Father of law, and King of intelligence. Of causality in general, He is the fountain, and ordains the modes and limits, under which all causes shall operate. This ordinance is written in the nature of everything below mind, and is self-exponent to observation—but a nature morally causal, as mind is, must be morally governed. So vast a privilege of life—so close

a resemblance to the Deity, cannot have been given, without conditions limiting the use of its powers, and prescribing its end. A self regulative nature—one acting from selfformed motives, must be capable of various and opposite effects-of exemplifying the moral characters of good and evil-right and wrong. Such a nature, however free, cannot act irrespective of the will of Him who made it, without traversing the first law of its being, which is, that no being shall be properly causal, but only in subordination to Himself. He, that is God, must see to the maintenance of his own laws, wherever it is possible they should be transgressed. He must appoint the methods of his executive, however complex and manifold, accompanying the whole system of means with so direct and influential an oversight, that his will is, in some degree or sense, always accomplished, however the results may vary. The absolute sovereignty of him who is God, is included in his being. All moral, as well as physical events, must come to pass as he wills them; considered in respect of the system, taken as a whole; and the relations he has been pleased to institute, between his creatures and himself. His predestinations, which give birth both to moral and physical systems, take effect upon them respectively according to their natures. They cannot militate with each other; nor can it be necessary for him to counteract or supercede either, in the progress of his administration, lest otherwise He should fail of compassing his own ends. It is God, not fate, that rules the world; and perhaps, the scriptures are more frequent and emphatic in enforcing the doctrine of God's sovereignty than any other. Two specimens may be selected from the same prophet. "Now the Egyptians are men, and not God; and their horses flesh, and not spirit." When the Lord shall stretch out his hand, both he that helpeth and he that is holpen—"shall fail together." And again, "I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace and create evil; I the Lord do all these things." In fact, the whole doctrine of prophecy rests upon this basis, while its imagery is so bold and sublime, and its edicts and proclamations are so characteristic of a divine majesty, that the book which contains them may well challenge a more than human origin. How often does the majestic formula occur, as a royal sign manual, appended to some message of threatening import to a nation -" And ye shall know that I am the Lord?" And how frequently too, is the prediction of some great public event appealed to, as a written, irrefragable proof, that the Anthor of the Bible was the Ruler of the world? Here was the prediction, there was the accomplishment. The Jewish Church rested on the double basis of miracle and prophecy, not as separate and independent facts, but mutually inclusive; while the prophetic argument received constant corroboration from the extension of it to the fortunes of surrounding nations. Thus, the evidence drawn from providential interposition, in favour of the truth of the Bible, became irresistible—Israel was sure that his God was God; hence the text says, "Know that I am God;" which implies something more than mere faith-persuasion, founded on probable evidence. "Know that I am God,"-it was an indisputable verity; and he was called to apply it to the course of the world's events. The perfect acquisition of this knowledge—the full enthronement of this conviction in the mind of the church, casts a light broad and clear, upon the state and government of the It averred His full dominion over the world-it stamped His great policy over the nations with the most assuring evidence—it evinced the unity of His plans, and the ends to which they conducted—it enabled the Church to take the bearings of their times—to see the road by

which all agencies travelled to their predestinated pointand the accomplishment in which they rested, like angel's wings, let down after a fulfilled mission.

(1.) His end necessarily reveals itself to us in the light of his absolute sovereignty-" I will be exalted in the earth." As God he must design to make himself known to his creatures, both for their benefit, and his own glory. A governor must be known, to be honoured and obeyed. The glory of universal dominion is ascribed to Him in the songs of heaven, which must meet with a response from earth. It belongs to His being and position over his creatures. It involves the very ground and end of creation—the honour of His name—and the interests of our Religion is therefore the first duty of creatures. For in no other sense can God be said to be exalted in the earth, than by His dominion over his rational offspring. Spiritual and holy homage is due to Him from all people. The Supreme government must have a primary and absolute claim upon the obedience of every man personally, and upon man socially, as he forms communities and nations. The individual and the public homage blend, but they are distinct. Every human being owes God duty as a Father; but nations, as a Sovereign—the individual, as the image of God-society, as holding dominion over sections of the earth owes Him fealty, as the Monarch of the whole world. Crowns on earth, as well as crowns in heaven, are to be cast before Him. Dominion is to be publicly owned as His gift—the ordinance that binds society together, imparting to it unity, strength, and order—making the majesty of one, the image of His own or the dignity of the few, the benefit of the many. As God, he gives his sanction to the system of earthly magistracy. By me, says wisdom, "Kings rule, and princes decree justice." He arraigns and judges nations, as such. He takes

cognisance of the public acts of rulers, and of those sins which, by universal consent, or legislative sanction, may be regarded as national. Yet are nations, as such, partakers of the benefits of a mediatorial administration, as well as individuals. Their sins are not hastily punished. All mitigations possible to a reign of holiness, mark the judgments inflicted on them. Intercession is available for them. The number of God-fearing people found in a kingdom, are graciously regarded for public good; and public humiliation is effectual to avert impending judgments, and to prolong national reprieve. Moreover, God is a moral Sovereign; and in this character comes nigh to every human bosom. Every man stands before Him irrespective of his relations to his fellow, and his position in society, as a being perfect in himself-a being invested with awful powers and responsibilities. He claims dominion in the will, the conscience, the heart. It is governing power of the highest kind that He exercises over individual man-at once creating devotion and virtue, in their utmost strength-rendering social masses a noble aggregate of moral glory, like the confluence of solar rays, each one of which is tinged with its own celestial colour. He is a Saviour too, and this character surmounts His whole moral dominion, and is intimately blended with it throughout. His rule is one of unfailing and infinitely fruitful charity over man, from the world's beginning; and will remain so till its close. Its hues are broadly cast over the whole field and firmanent of providence. It spans the whole world, like its symbol bow in the heavens—ranging through heaven and earth, it rules every element, ordains all blessings, debates with judgments, and makes the sorest of them minister to its own ultimate ends. The admission of this principle, and its predominancy in the dominion of God over man, impart to it indeed a very perplexing and

anomalous character. No one principle, or rule of human judgment, is applicable to it, and illustrated by it throughout. Justice or mercy may be alternately ascendant, always mixed, but frequently in unequal proportions. Such phenomena are explicable only by the facts and doctrines of revelation, which shews us the work of Christ, and the bearings of the Atonement—that present appearances are not final, even as regards the earthly destiny of our race—and that all the relations and interests of man, as an earthly being, are but introductory to a second and everlasting condition of his existence. The text, then, points out to us two great doctrines.

- (1.) God's right to be exalted in the earth; and
- (2.) His purpose to bring this to pass. It implies that His right is not acknowledged, but too generally overlooked, and treated with scorn and contempt. indeed an awful fact to affirm of a world, reminding us of our Saviour's solemn and impassionate address: "O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee." insist upon this fact at length—to argue it elaborately, or to expatiate on its moral enormity—its causes, tendencies, consequences—or the diversity of forms it assumes, is not to the present purpose. It is more pertinent to bring forward the Divine purpose, founded on his rightful, unalienable claim, to be glorified in His creatures, by those dispositions and acts which become their relations to him, and the majesty of His being. To be God, and to be exalted are correlevant terms. According to the measure of creature capacity, and of his benefits, must glory be rendered to Him by all. God's purpose, therefore, is to maintain and to diffuse religion through the world. The heathen are here mentioned synonymously with nations; but with marked respect to their religious condition. God's purpose is to put down the irreligion of the world, in whatever forms it may

prevail—however inveterate and prescriptive its dominion -however dark, baneful, and destructive may be its sway. This one leading view of his design, enables us to understand what is his controversy with the world; and how far the world is now, as well as in so remote an age as that in which this Psalm was penned, from a true correspondence with his will, and from the true weal of its existence. God is not exalted, in the knowledge of his name, and the hearty, practical admission of his sovereign rights. He is not exalted, as the One Ruler of all nations; by which alone, His providential Sovereignty is commensurately recognized. He is not exalted, as a moral and judicial Sovereign; whose laws, whether written in the heart, or conveyed by special interposition, and supernatural modes; are to pervade the whole nature, relations, and habits of universal man. He is not exalted as a Saviour in the earth. Infidelity was the burden of prophetic complaint, when the age and object of manifestation were foreseen, and the career of the Christian religion among the nations in after times. "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" Predictions, gloomy and grievous, are embodied in the last revelations of Christ, and his apostles. falling away" is described in no common terms. mystery of iniquity" unfolds itself as a reign of darkness and tyranny over the world; an iron age, or rather cycle, whose beginning and end seem to include a fearful portion of the Gospel day. The purpose here avowed is worthy of the majesty and grace of the Supreme Ruler; and, taken in connection with the facts of history and present observation, shows how vast a revolution must take place on earth, ere it can be accomplished; and how truly the administration destined to accomplish it is called, "the mystery of God." This exaltation must include the prevalence of true religion through the world—the destruction of idolatry—

the cessasion of the reign of superstition, ignorance, and irreligion-in short, of anti-christ in every form-the diffusion of Divine truth, and the reign of the Holy Spiritthe institutions, and the moral law of Christianity everywhere established. Nothing can be clearer than that God's purpose to be universally and finally exalted, is the whole scope of his government, present, as well as past and future. This is the gist of all prophetic testimony, and the lesson of all inspired history—it is indeed the summary of the old testament record. It is seen in the peculiarities of the Jewish polity—in the Theocratic form of their government. The oneness of all human interests with religion, was the doctrine thus set forth; not indeed always and everywhere to be perpetuated in that one mode, and by the same means; but by the truths, agencies, and influences of a future aud far higher system of rule. The grand doctrine of prophecy is, throughout both testaments, one. Its true unity, its profoundest wisdom, its brightest evidence, consist in the constancy and fulness of this one idea; everywhere radient as the sun in its strength-viz: the reign of God upon the earth. The land and the times of the Theocracy—the Kings—the people, the heirs of this glory, seemed to be the very centre of vision for all lands, and all generations. How strikingly did all prophetic vision give greatness and interest to this alone! How were the strains of inspired song filled with it? The temple, the closet, the wilderness, were alike visited by the same all teaching Spirit, shewing to anointed persons—to deep, wistful piety—the glorious things to come! When patriarchs saw visions, or dreamed dreams—they were of an empire to arise out of their family, to be spread through all lands, and to be a blessing to all people. All prophets wrote and spake one theme-the Kingdom of God-the Heavenly light—the overruling grace—the dominion of the Father

in the Son. When Nebuchadnezzar dreams: Daniel interprets by the same spirit, and to the same effect. "In the days of these kings, shall the God of heaven set up a Kingdom which shall never be destroyed." but it shall "break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." And, the last pages of the holy book shew us "the kingdoms of the world become the kingdoms of our God and of his Christ"—the kingdom of God, actually established—the whole policy of heaven carried out—a voice from the Throne crying "it is done." The assurances of prophecy are conveyed to us with a record of means and provisions. THE GOSPEL is a descriptive appellation of the kingdom of Christ, inclusive of its prospective destiny, agreeably to the substance of prophecy; and of its revelation of the true and perfect doctrine of the kingdom of God. This remark is so obviously sustained by the New Testament, that particular proofs are unnecessary: while the importance of it is seen in the fact, that it opens to us the bond between the old dispensation and the new,-and the connection of the latter with the future fulfilment of prophecy, in the renovation of the world. The kingdom of God is the evangelical dispensation opened by Christ and his apostles, and conducted from age to age by means of His Church. We have no scriptural right to include more in it essentially, than "the faith once delivered to the saints," and "the common salvation" derived from it: with the duties comprising its moral summary, and its church organization. These are the kingdom of God; other things may be auxiliary, or preparatory to it—they may blend with it, or arise out of it, but they are not of it. reign of God is simply christianity, in its own order of development, and its peculiar fruits. It stands alone in its essence and sufficiency, as God's ordinance for recovering men, and blessing nations. There is, not only nothing

beyond it-nothing greater than itself-nothing to the establishment of which it is simply in the order of means, -there is nothing comparable to it-it is itself the end, because it is the reign of God; and everything else is to be regarded only as subsidiary to its spread, and as preparatory to its triumph. It is "the kingdom which cannot be be moved"—all other things may, and will be shaken this, because it is the kingdom of God, must remain. will be exalted in the earth." This decree is written upon the whole system of Christian truth-all the facts, doctrines, and purposes of the Gospel, serve but to convey this oracle to us with weightier evidence. But there is one all-comprising truth, which gives it the force of a demonstration; and this is the mediatorial exaltation of Christ himself. His rule is supreme, absolute, specific. He is "Head over all things to the Church," and "He must reign till all enemies are put under his feet," though we "see not yet all things put under Him." "I will be exalted in the earth." This is the decree of the Fatheranother is answerable to it as the ordinance for its accomplishment. "I have set my king upon my holy hill of Zion." The prayer of Christ is exegetic of this, "Glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: as thou hast hast given him power (or empire) over all flesh." what St. Paul calls, His "good confession," viz: of His royalty before Pilate, in answer to his question "Art thou a king, then?" To this also John refers in the opening of the apocalypse, as a suitable preface to that most august vision of His sovereign glory: "The true and faithful witness-the Prince of the kings of the earth." The sum of the testimonies respecting our Lord's royalty is, that it is especially designed to restore the dominion of God over the world. For this purpose, He sets up a new dominion of Grace and holiness by His gospel; forms his adminis-

tration in His church; and supports it by a providential economy adapted to its nature and ends. The apocalypse is intended as a prophetic supplement to the evangelical system. It is the Lamb's own book-and reveals the fortunes of His kingdom, past and future, as presided over by himself in his high office of a mediatorial Sovereign. The fifth chapter is therefore to be viewed as the doctrinal symbol of the whole book, and as a compendium of the results of the Lamb's reign: "and every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." This evangelical exposition of the purpose noted in the text, suggests to us corresponding views of the nature and tendencies of the measures employed by Almighty God to bring it to pass. (1.) It shews us the supreme value of gospel instruments, influences, and results. These with God must be prior to every other: because, as far as they succeed, they really and at once reach his great end in man, whether considered in his terrestrial condition, or in his relations to the life to come; and also, because success is the germ of future and wider results. Such is the doctrine of our Lord's parables—such the doctrine of history, and of existing facts. Christianity, to whatever extent it is really propagated, is an ultimate thing with God-spread it everywhere, and the voice from the Throne speaks, "it is done." (2.) Conformably with this view is another, which is in fact included in it—that the church, as the Witness for God, and existing executive of his plans, must be the special object of his providential care. This truth is nobly expressed in the Psalm, "God, is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved—God shall help her, and that right early." The world is His dominion

-the Church is His temple. The nations are His subjects -His people, are His inheritance-Israel, His peculiar treasure. The testimony of all history is explicit on this point—the indestructibility of the church; for every form of combination has been tried against it, in vain. "In vain do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing." The heathen raged, the people were moved, (in hostile combination against His church,) essaying its utter overthrow: "He uttered His voice"—(at once dissolving the confederacy, and blasting its designs)-"The earth melted." Persecutions may waste, but they cannot subvert-distress, but never conquer. The bush burns, but it is "not consumed." Jerusalem besieged, is made to all nations, "a burdensome stone," and "like a torch of fire in a sheaf." The horse is smitten "with astonishment, and his rider with madness;" and Gog and Magog, with their innumerable hosts, are finally destroyed by fire from heaven. "The Lord of hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge;" the evangelical exposition of which is, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." (8.) It opens to us true views of the character of public and striking providences. They are judicial—the direct issues of a moral sovereignty over the earth: and are therefore to be regarded as punitive visitations, designed to illustrate His ever vigilant holiness, and His judgment of the true condition of the world. Such is the uniform testimony of scripture concerning the Divine administration over ancient kingdoms, as Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, and even Israel itself. The dismemberment and ruin of empires; with all the wars, seditions, and public woes involved in their downfall, are always ascribed to the inquisition of God for iniquity; or, as it was expressed in words to the greatest monarch that ever filled a throne on earth: "This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word

of the holy ones, to the intent that the living may know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will." Judgment, however, is the last resort of the King of heaven: at least in its extreme and crushing form. He destroys only those nations that refuse instruction, and obstinately adhere to their impieties, when His goodness should have led them to repentance, and His longsuffering have effected their reformation. National afflictions are always evidences of national corruptions, and of aggravated guilt: Up to a certain point, however, they are intended as chastenings, and warnings—they are meant to work the cure of the evils which draw down upon them the divine anger—they are merciful expostulations—they occur at intervals—till the day of national, as well as of individual probation, is over. Till then, the judgments befalling nations, are always bounded by some favourable circumstances. They do not alight contemporaneously on a land, as "his four sore judgments" were said to do, for destruction. There are intervals of respite—a large preponderance of good-general prosperity-progress may be traced in the affairs of an empire-ameliorative institutions spring up, to maintain it in vigour, and expansive poweryet, are we never to forget the judicial character of national visitations, even though somewhat ordinary; much less then, the extraordinary and astounding events which have so suddenly burst upon us; and which involve, not one nation only, but the whole family of Europe, in peril and dismay! Surely, if there be truth in the doctrine of a providence, and especially that of the divine sovereignty over nations; the present condition of Europe is a most awakening example of it. The suddenness and magnitude of these events are unparalelled in the history of ancient or modern times. All was peace yesterday—to-day, all is agitation and tumult. Dominion seemed a little while ago

to be firmly seated, "like the great mountains," which "He setteth fast by his power." Kings seemed to sleep upon their thrones, and subjects to look upon their State guardians, and institutions, if not with unmixed complacency-yet with respect; and with no disposition to revolt. The military profession seemed but the lingering relict of a barbarous, and all but forgotten age. History was to record wars, but posterity know none. The form, the material, the science, the holiday pomp of soldiership, were kept up-but the temple of Janus remained closed in Europe so long, that the hinges of its doors seemed too rusty to allow them to be again opened, and itself more likely to be converted into the temple of Concord. How vainly was it imagined that our race verged upon the last golden age of the world, after innumerable centuries of strife, bloodshed, and comparative savagism? Science was henceforth to renew the face of society—commerce to bind the nations for ever into a compact and peaceful brotherhood. Mutual confidence, continual intercourse, friendly converse, ardour for social advancement, national development, and political regeneration, were to become the guarantees for the everlasting tranquility of nations, and triumphantly to usher in the Jubilee of the world! All sciolists, and minute philosophers-all worldly patriots, commercial theorists, and utilitarians of every class, who dreamed every man his dream. or beheld in his vision the image of his wishes-of his interests—or the paradise of his impiety—have suddenly been awakened, as by the shock of an earthquake, to behold in the tottering and paralized condition of a whole continent, the vanity of their imaginations, and the falsity of their predictions. The pride of power, the loftiness of princes, have been suddenly abased. The rulers of the earth have been most affectingly taught the insecurity of thrones, and the shadowness of man, in hi best estate—that there is a Power

which gives power, as well "as life, and breath"-and calls them to surrender it, at His will. The haughty prince, who heard the dread oracle, so soon fulfilled-"the kingdom is departed from thee"-was scarcely more grievously abased than have been some potentates within the last few weeks; or taught more loudly the lesson urged upon him, that "The Heavens do rule." How has the sovereignty of God been proclaimed by the sounds of falling thrones, and sovereigns cast into exile. or compelled to make a humiliating compromise with their people—having only left to them a shadow of royalty, a reedlike sceptre-bruised, or broken, by the blasts of popular breath. What rebukes has God uttered to nations for their ingratitude for the blessings of a long and fruitful European peace! Exhausted nations have been recruited—commerce has been prodigiously extended—and the hearts and enjoyments of life have progressed to a degree formerly unknown—yet what have been the returns? Religion has everywhere languished—pride and luxury, covetousness and worldliness, immorality and Sabbathbreaking, have increased fearfully-portending a coming deluge of atheism and wickedness that would sweep religion from the earth. Principles at war with the stability, and even existence of society, have been silently and plentifully sowing, during the long season of general peace-levelling doctrines, which-under the guise of of patriotism and liberty, the dearest names, and, (next to religion,) the best friends of man-disallow all authority, human and divine-have been spread by manifold agency, and with wide success. Now, at once, the harvest is ripe! All lands are big with anarchy, and overspread with the signals of convulsion and ruin. The arts of peace are already supplanted by the habiliments of war. Military millions rise up, as the mighty host from the sod

of the prophetic valley of dry bones, at the breath of these furious winds. The weapons of death are clasped, as the dearest companions of man—the guarantees and and badges of his freedom-his pride, and glory. The world again flies to arms—just as if the experiment were to be for the first time made: and knew not, as Abner said to Joab, that "bitterness was at the latter end" of every appeal to the sword. The shock of present events is felt through the whole frame of society—it thrills from the centre to the circumference of nations. The true interests, the every day business of men, are in abevance. A rabid fever has taken the place of a healthy action the ordinary tone of human sentiment, feeling, and conversation, has given place to a tension of mind bordering on madness. The private citizen, is lost in the huge, monster attributes, of his nationality, and the sudden assumption of those functions which exalt all into kings, but leave no residue as subjects. The transient characters of this strange movement, are perhaps the less to be regarded than its career of probable consequences. We seem to look on breathlessly; as heaven, after a seal has been broken, or a trumpet sounded, to observe its effectsor to anticipate another—and yet another. But whatever may be the results—be they ever so beneficial ultimately the dispensation cannot be divested of its judicial characters. These are indellibly stamped upon it. God has arisen out of his place, to punish the nations for their iniquities—to break in pieces all the muniments of national glory—to dissolve, as by one touch the compacts which have held the greatest powers together-to toss them as feathers in the blast-to shove them into new and hazardous positions towards each other, and to raise up in some respects a new form of evil-the present contest not being as heretofore between nation and nation, from

the designs of ambition, and the secret intrigues of Courts. Between the rulers of the earth there was never better understanding—a more perfect resting in mutual friendship, and the faith of treaties—when, lo! in a moment the evil rises as from under their feet, and from the bosoms of their own subjects rushes the mighty element which overturns thrones, and transforms the face of the world!

(2.) Providence is not only judicial, but ameliorative. It destroys, in order to rebuild—it plucks up, that it may plant again. Its whole scheme is to counterwork evil, and to educe good from it, in opposition to its own laws. We are to "come and behold what desolations" God "has made in the earth," but we are to behold them in their evangelical connections, never alone. Thus the desolations are the pioneers of beneficial changes—and the work of judgment is to plough the soil, and to prepare it for the sweet husbandry of mercy—as it was, ere our world was as now it is -or when first created—then paradise bloomed, and smiled o'er the ruins of former epochs unchronicled by the hand of man. As the fall—that mightiest desolation—blasted all the virgin vigour and beauty of a new made world-yet was this desolation but the precursor and condition of a sublimer restoration, whose issue was a new and nobler existence to man, redeemed by incarnate Divinitybought off from the penalties of sin, and bought for the highest honours and offices of eternal being. The natural seasons, are the types of the moral. Winter harbingers Spring-and Summer's golden glories await the prelude of vernal showers and suns—the music of awakened nature the general concert of new-born life, everywhere sportive and vocal. Thus too in personal religion, the translative process is from ruin to restoration—from sorrow to joy from the curse to the blessing—and thus too it is ordained that sufferings should perfect the discipline of immortality -and the pains of death become to us the messengers which convey us to the joys of Heaven. Such also is the public course of the divine administration. maketh wars to cease unto the ends of the earth,"-wars with all their attendant desolations, the harbingers of universal peace. He melts the nations in his fiery furnace, and fuses them, to refine and to recast them, as the new man, in the glory of His own image. How exquisitely is the connection between the work of judgment and the designs of mercy presented in the prophetic picture of Israel's final restoration!-" Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree." And how sublimely does an Apostle combine the miseries of a world, with its last emancipation from corruption's bondage, when he listens to the cries of the agonized creation, and interprets them but as the birth pangs of the last glory of incorruption! Changes and disasters must belong to a remedial government, the subjects of which are such beings as men. No one order of things from the world's beginning until now, has been worthy of perpetuity. The utter want of all harmony with Christianity that marks the condition of almost all nations, should reconcile us to the prospect of change, and to the expectation, that the future has something better in store for the world than the past-while the instincts of universal man—his disquietude in his lot—his vearning, desultory inquiry, Who will shew us any good ?-his eager, unappeased thirsting after something, he knows not what—these seem to teach us that they are but the reminiscences of a paradise which God has imprinted within him, ever since the day of his expulsion-reminding him both of the date of his miseries, and his blissand also that they are prophetic sympathies from the same good Spirit-leading him to regard a paradise as yet hidden in the future, and to anticipate "the glorious liberty of the sons of God." Religion, in its full reign, and abiding glory, may be long and late in coming—but come it must. "I will be exalted in the earth." "This is the purpose purposed on the whole earth—and this the hand stretched out upon all nations." Such a consummation—embodying all principles—the results of all influences—the complex action of a Divine government, at once moral, restorative, and providential, must, humanly speaking, be a last thing. 'Twas "in the wisdom of God," that "the world by wisdom knew not God;" and it is still in the course of that wisdom that the world's renovation is delayed. The reasons for both proceedings are similar, while the length and immensity of the preparations for it, augur the overwhelming greatness of it, when it shall arrive. Looking at present events, which now so deeply engross us, it must strike us. that they are the crisis of changes long since silently begun,—that they are the inevitable results of the tendencies of the human mind, when gasping for expansion, and under the influences of culture; of social development. long peace, and incessant stimulant from the growth of population, and national energy. Under these influences. it were impossible that ancient institutions should abide intact. They expire and pass away, when bereft of the support of general opinion, and sympathy. A new era of social and national existence has suddenly opened upon Europe. The doctrines of authority, prescription, and indefeisible rights are now exploded. All artificial bulwarks of order are swept away: the human mind sighs for liberty and latitude. The pendulum vibrates in the opposite extreme to that of deference and unquestioning submission. Everything now must be submitted to the ordeal of popular scrutiny, and everything settled, or unsettled. by the voice of collective, rather than of individual and representative man. These bearings of the times, are too plain to be mistaken. Prescription, dictation, force, all give place to the tribunal omnipotence of what, at least claims to be reason. Such a state of mind, pervading the most important section of the human family, must portend something great. It must be the preparation for something better, or something worse. Existing things have been swept away, because they did not answer His design, who has said, "I will be exalted in the earth." He has now opened a new and wide field for Himself. The bulwarks of former days have been tested in their application to the religious question, and have been dismissed as unserviceable. Too many governments have fostered and defended popery; too many have prescribed a reformed system, and refused religious liberty; some have persecuted, all have discountenanced, real, spiritual religion-and its interests have ebbed, and its power decayed. It is probable that Popery must lose by the present movement—and that its power must hereafter be maintained by dint of priestly pliancy, and industry; or, it will fall. The tone of independence, now everywhere assumed, will probably discard a system which claims so despotic a sway over the human The strong and perhaps permanent setting in of mind. the tide of political liberalism, will, it may be hoped, when time has rendered it more tranquil; and experience have supplied the lessons of public wisdom, prepare the mind of nations more generally to entertain Christianity, on its own proper evidences of divinity, and manifest excellency—to examine and regard it more for its own sake than formerlyand even as a necessary balancing power, in the working of free communities; giving to the social compact whatever forms it may assume, a stability not inherent in itself, but induced by bringing state relations within the range of its sanctions; and rendering the duties both of magistrates and people, not mere matters of advantage, or expediency; but of obligation, imposed by heaven itself, and made part and parcel of Christ's irrevocable law.

In conclusion. It is manifest that the whole shewing of these events is a deep and universal need of religion in nations, even in those most privileged, and by comparison, the best of their compeers. To a christian spirit, this is the most affecting impression derived from public events. The spectacle of nations, when their interior state is thus exposed to us, is aptly described by the olden language of the prophet—" from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot there is no soundness in it, but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores." The disease is in its extent, virulency, and threatened consequences, appaling; but our joy is, that a divine remedy is provided, and that the wisdom and power of heaven are in operation, to bring it into universal application. These dispensations are Divinely medical in their aim—they are wise and merciful assaults upon inveterate and widely seated disease. They are not indeed the medicine, but yet, the Physician's hand is in them. Christianity is the only healing balm; but judgments make the sickness known, and felt, which otherwise would have latently ripened in death; and they create a disposition to seek the remedy, and to appreciate the blessing of moral restoration. When "His way" is known upon earth, "His saving health" will be circulate through all nations. To the friends of religion, the times bear no disheartening aspects. The passage of clouds, and the fury of the tempest, cannot last for ever—they will purify the atmosphere, and be followed by a brighter sun, and fragrant flowers, and fruitful seasons, from His hand "who crowns the year with His goodness." Great good is in the wake of present events, when the earthquake is passed, and the mountains

are drowned. The olive tree cannot perish in the floods, nor the wings of the dove disappear from the face of the deluge, nor the rainbow vanish from the cloud, till the fair countenance of the heavens again break forth to the vision of earth's people, and the eras of trouble and convulsion, shall have been forgotten in the blest ages, and beatific vision of New Jerusalem, beheld in her glory; and Paradise reopened in more than primeval beauty—in fine, till the Kingdom of God is established fully, and for ever, on the earth.

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THE GRACE GIVEN TO MINISTERS TO PREACH THE UNSEARCHABLE RICHES OF CHRIST.

A SERMON

PREACHED IN

THE CHAPEL OF FARNHAM CASTLE,

AT

THE GENERAL ORDINATION

HELD BY

THE LORD BISHOP OF WINCHESTER,

JULY 9, 1848.

BY THE

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A SERMON,

фc.

EPHESIANS iii. 8.

"Unto me who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ."

An ancient writer terms the apostle Paul "the cloud of God." For by him the God of all goodness sends forth those glorious truths which, like flashes of lightning, astonish and enlighten the soul. Like the cloud also, which, after the lightning has flashed and the thunder has rolled, drops down its benignant showers to soften, refresh, and fertilize the earth,—so this inspired apostle is made the medium of imparting the most cheering and consolatory truths to the heart.

Such was the fulness of his inspiration, and such the powers of his highly-gifted mind, that no ordinary language could set forth his grand ideas. We have a striking example of this in our text, where, soaring far beyond the rules for the general structure of language, he invents a word beyond a superlative. He says. "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, to preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." Here, as if no terms then in use could express his sense of his own insignificancy on the one hand, and the unfathomable excellencies of the Lord Jesus Christ on the other, he is not satisfied with calling himself the least of the apostles, or the least of the saints—but his description is "LESS THAN THE LEAST;" as if he desired to compress himself into the smallest possible compass: not little, nor less, nor least, but still more diminutive-you have descended to a low point, but you must descend yet lower, and lower still-I am least of all, yea, less than the least.

On the other hand, when he mentions the riches of Christ, he does not, as upon some other occasions, speak of the riches of his grace, or his goodness, or his glory; or, as having in him "all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge"—these expressions would not satisfy his fully-teeming mind. But as if no measure could reach the

extent, and no diligence fully explore, the excellencies of the Lord Jesus, he calls them "the unsearchable riches of Christ."

As the consideration of this subject may, by the divine blessing, tend to enlarge our minds; to lead us, in some faint degree, to see how glorious a Saviour we have; and you more especially, my beloved brethren, who are this day to be ordained as his ministers, to estimate the high and blessed privilege conferred upon you, I purpose opening up, as the time, and especially the ability the Lord shall afford me, will admit, the propriety of these terms. First—the unsearchable riches of Christ; and, secondly—the grace given to the apostle in preaching these riches among the Gentiles.

And if upon any occasion you have earnestly sought the aid of the Holy Spirit to accompany the preached word, let me now entreat your fervent prayers that the Comforter may come unto us. May He who is the glorifier of Jesus, make his strength perfect in our weakness,—open our lips to speak forth the praises of the Lord, and open each heart to receive the truth, to their present comfort and future edification.

Let us, then, attempt to show the PROPRIETY OF THE TERM, "UNSEARCHABLE RICHES OF CHRIST."

This expression is the more remarkable, if we

consider that the apostle had now for above thirty years—yea, for a longer period than this—been exploring these rich mines.

It was when but a young man that the Lord called the apostle to preach the Gospel. Many, many had been the souls who, by the power of the Holy Spirit, he had brought to see the glories of the Lord Jesus. Various were the epistles which, by divine inspiration, he had written, setting forth his excellencies; still, although he had, with the unabated ardour of the huntsman, and the laborious patience of the miner, for the word we translate "unsearchable." has a reference to both: still the riches of Christ were unsearchable, like those mines into which the deeper they are dug the brighter the ore appears -and still wider and wider the veins extend. Thus it was with the riches of Christ. more closely he tracked the Lord Jesus, the more diligently he sought to discover his excellencies -the more profound they were—they were still "unsearchable riches." Thus they will appear if we consider—first, THE RICH MERITS, OR THE INEXHAUSTIBLE FULNESS OF HIS MOST PRECIOUS BLOOD.

For nearly six thousand years, the church of God has been applying to these treasures. For every departed saint, whose spirit has entered into glory, has received forgiveness of his sins

by virtue of the merit drawn from this source. For although there have been differences of administration, still the way of salvation, from the fall of man to the present time, has been the same. Hence our Lord is called "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world "-- " Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." was by faith that Abel offered up a lamb. It was in reference to his merits that Abraham saw the day of Christ, and was glad. Of him also Moses and the prophets did write. Consider, then, the vast numbers of the departed saints, although, in the very early ages of the church, they may appear to be few. At other times they are as numbers without number. All these Old Testament saints have received forgiveness through the merits of Christ.

The same may be said of the New Testament church—the primitive converts from Judaism as well as the churches of the Gentiles—were all baptized in the name of Jesus, and received remission of sins through his precious blood. So in modern times every congregation of true worshippers, whose sins have been put away, have owed their pardon to his merits. How numerous have been their iniquities!

Take a single congregation. In that will be found some who, in the early part of their lives, have fallen into the sins of the world, "the lust of

the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life." Others have passed their time in careless negligence or self-gratification—" living without God in the world." There are others who have transgressed in a different way. Children who have been disobedient to their parents, and harsh and unkind one to another; and others who in secret have sinned against the Most High.

It will be difficult to find a congregation of any extent where we shall not meet with such characters.

How numerous, then, do the sins of only one church, taken thus collectively, appear! And yet these persons, if they have individually applied to our blessed Lord, have proved the truth of that peculiarly consoling declaration of the apostle, that "by Him all that believe are justified from all things from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."*

And still his merits are the same. You and I, my beloved friends, if we apply this day to the Lord Jesus Christ, shall find that his precious blood has not lost the least of its virtue, but that still, as the apostle St. John declares,† "the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

Does not this abundance of merit show us the propriety of the term, "the unsearchable riches

^{*} Acts xiii. 39. † 1 John's Epistles i. 7.

of Christ?" for who can explore the extent of that excellence, which is so great as entirely to put away every figment of sin, so that not the least spot remains, but washed in his blood, they stand before the throne, their garments like fine linen, clean and white. No creature can dive into this abyss. He only who searcheth all things can fathom its immeasurable depth. Oh that every one of us, my beloved friends and brethren, may experimentally know its worth!

That we may with deepest gratitude unite in the apostolic thanksgiving "unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

Stillfurther to manifest the propriety of the term "unsearchable riches," regard the stores of GRACE WHICH ARE TREASURED UP IN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST FOR THE SUPPLY OF THE PRESENT WANTS OF HIS PEOPLE.

That we may better realize this, contemplate the various cases of sincere Christians as the light of day dawns upon them. All rise as to their souls as they do as to their bodies. All empty and unclothed. For the supplies of grace on one day no more suffice for the next than the food they eat. All require fresh grace.

Thousands there are who have wet their couch with tears, and rise with the burden of unpar-

doned sin; a still greater number with perplexing cares and distressing sorrows. All these are to be supplied with grace sufficient for them from "the unsearchable riches of Christ."

It is his precious blood which is to speak peace to their wounded consciences; his strength, which is to invigorate the feeble-minded; his wisdom, which is to enlighten the ignorant; his help, which is to give power to the tempted, when sorely harassed by their spiritual foes. no other refuge but in Him. As it is said of the animal creation, "The eyes of all wait upon thee, and thou givest them their meat in due season." Thus it may be said of all true believers: there is not a Christian whose eye is not turned to the Lord Jesus. They look to Him as the Psalmist did when he said, "All my springs are in thee."* Pardon, peace, holiness, happiness, all in thee. This has now been proceeding for many, many ages. Must there not then be abundant riches in Him to have supplied all these demands? and yet the stock remains unimpaired. Still to every one who comes to our blessed Lord, the word is " My grace is sufficient for thee." Well may the prophet Isaiah, in the thirty-third chapter of his prophecies, say of Him, "The glorious Lord shall be to us a place of broad rivers and streams." The expression is remarkable. The Lord, on the one

^{*} Psalm lxxxvii. 7.

hand, is compared to a majestic river whose full waters fertilize many a plain. On the other hand, to a gentle stream which refreshes the plants and flowers of the humble cottage garden. My beloved brethren, it is delightful to trace these "unsearchable riches" as they appear on the Lord's day. How many large and crowded churches will this day partake of the waters of this "broad river?" whilst, in answer to their petitions, how many a poor widow, or trembling penitent, or harassed believer, will receive of the abundant grace flowing into their hearts like that "gentle stream which makes glad the city of God!"

Did time permit, I might further show the propriety of the term "unsearchable riches" by exploring other veins of this extensive mine. We might set before you the riches of wisdom which are treasured up in the Lord Jesus. Or examine his compassion, or try to fathom his goodness; these would be delightful occupations, but they would be endless. We might say of them all, as it is declared in the book of Job of wisdom. "There is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen. The lion's whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce lion passed by it." * The same would be the case if we were to take his love. What unsearchable riches are here! Such are its treasures, that

though it may be traced through eternity past, or to that period when the Eternal Three sat in council, and entered into the everlasting covenant for our redemption, and may be followed in its progress to a time when in a sense earth was richer than heaven, by having Him dwelling upon it, "who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God," for our sakes took our nature upon him, and endured the accursed death of the cross. Still it is unsearch-For who can set forth what that love will accomplish when myriads of sinners, like you and I, my beloved friends, shall stand before the throne? Every one holy, every one happy; yea, so happy, that heaven's wide domains are not large enough to contain their joys. Hallelujahs burst from their lips which the lowest deep shall hear; and for this purpose, to bear witness to the truth of the apostolic declaration, that the riches of Christ are "unsearchable riches."

Allow your minds, my beloved brethren, to dwell upon this heart-enlarging subject. Entreat the aid of the Holy Spirit to quicken your sight. These riches of Christ are not imaginary. They rest upon the surest foundation, his previous poverty, or his so emptying himself of that glory "which he had with the Father before the world was," that "though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor; so poor, that as he

himself says by the lips of the inspired Psalmist, " I am a worm, and no man, a reproach of men, and despised of the people." It is upon this humiliation that his riches as Christ, or as Jehovah's anointed, rest,—that he, having in reply to the proposal that a body should be given him, said, "Lo, I come; I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart, Jehovah promised that he should see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied. And what was his satisfaction? that upon his finishing the work the Father had given him to do, those unsearchable riches should be his which would qualify him to confer present pardon, present grace, present peace, as well as everlasting glory upon all who were given him by the Father, even to as many as should believe on his name.

O my Friends, when we attempt to meditate upon these unsearchable riches, and upon the sure foundation upon which they rest, the heart expands, the lips want utterance, language loses its power. It seems marvellous that every one does not at once entreat, Oh that I were partaker of some portion, at least, of this true wealth, that, made rich in Christ, I might "set my affection on things above, and not on things on earth."

But I should detain you too long, delightful as the contemplation is, were I to dwell any further upon this part of the subject. I therefore proceed to a brief consideration of the apostle's estimate of the privilege of preaching these "unsearchable riches."

To me, he says, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ. THIS GRACE—THIS GRACE—as if the inspired apostle felt that amidst the many blessings freely bestowed upon him by the Lord, this was a very peculiar privilege, one which he should specially prize and dwell upon with adoring gratitude. To this estimate he might well be led,

lst. From a deep sense of his own unworthiness. In what striking language does he express this: "Less than the least of all saints." Forming, as I mentioned, a new word—departing from the general rules of grammar, no ordinary forms sufficing to express his meaning. This sense of his personal unworthiness he had derived from reflecting upon his past conduct on that period of his life when he had been "a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious;" and these reflections deepened by an accurate acquaintance with the spirituality of the divine law, and by an earnest desire to follow the footsteps of his Lord and Saviour.

For as one who is in a well-lighted chamber sees objects with far greater clearness than he does who is in a dark apartment; or as one who is eagerly pressing forward in a race, with a desire to win the prize, views his distance from the mark far differently from a mere spectator; thus the Christian, enlightened by the Holy Spirit, sees with a keen eye his numerous deviations from the perfect standard of that law which is "holy, just, and good;" and becomes increasingly sensible of his distance from Him who "did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth;" but was "holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners"—"the holy child, Jesus."

Such reflections might have led the apostle to those deep feelings of his own unworthiness; and this humility would cause him to admire the grace which had bestowed on him so dignified an office. For true humility leads the possessor highly to esteem the smallest gifts of the divine bounty.

Why is it, my dear friends, that we who have broken God's commandments, and rebelled against his authority?—Why is it that we are now sitting in health and peace in this house of prayer, when so many are enduring sorrow and suffering? Is it not to be ascribed to the divine favour alone? And shall we not, as we are sensible of our own unworthiness, be led to a thankful remembrance of these ordinary gifts of his providence? How much more then would the apostle admire the grace of preaching "the unsearchable riches of Christ."

For as David, when Saul's daughter was offered to him in marriage, said to his servants, "Seemeth it to you a light thing to be a king's son-in-law, seeing that I am a poor man, and lightly esteemed?" Well might the apostle express in such strong language, his grateful sense of the grace given to him, when he was chosen to be the servant of "the King of kings, and Lord of lords."

Of this high privilege you, my beloved brethren, will be reminded in the ordination service; you are directed to have in remembrance "into how high a dignity, and to how weighty an office and charge ye are called—that is to say, to be messengers, watchmen, and stewards of the Lord; to teach and to premonish, to feed and provide for the Lord's family; to seek for Christ's sheep that are dispersed abroad, and for his children who are in the midst of this naughty world, that they may be saved through Christ for ever."

Another reason for the apostle's high estimate of this grace would be, THE BLESSED PRIVILEGES CONNECTED WITH THIS OFFICE.

Whilst persons consider the preaching of the Gospel, as they would estimate the delivery of a philosophical essay; or whilst they view it as a test of the different talents of men, and compare

^{* 1} Samuel xviii. 23.

one minister with another, principally in this manner, it is not surprising that they have but low sentiments of the office. The apostle knew that this gift was entrusted to him for a far, far higher purpose; that it was an ordinance of God for the salvation of the soul.

For as he declares in his epistle to the Corinthians, "After that in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God it pleased God by the foolishness of *preaching* to save them that believe."*

This made him highly prize this gift of God, that thus he was made instrumental to confer the highest conceivable benefits upon his fellow sinners-and upon those who most needed them, the Gentile world. By declaring to men their lost state as sinners, and the remedy provided for them in "the unsearchable riches of Christ," he was plucking "brands from the burning," to place them as jewels in Emanuel's crown. His love to his fellow men would therefore aid in his estimate of his privilege of preaching "the unsearchable riches of Christ." For as it is a source of great pleasure to the Lord's faithful ministers, as I have no doubt some of you, my dear brethren, know by experience, when anything like a change is visible in any of their people who have been living according to the course of this world; still more

^{* 1} Corinthians i. 21.

so when the Lord blesses the preaching of the Gospel to them, brings them to a sense of their sin, and to such a dependence upon the Lord Jesus. Christ, as to bear marks of their being new creatures—this, this is the pastor's joy. It is not the mere delivery of a discourse, or having any of their hearers as they leave the Church, say, what a splendid sermon we have heard—this is not their object, but that when called to visit the sick, they may hear such words as these uttered by a dying man, as I have known to be spoken: "Sir, "it has been a blessing to me that I ever saw " your face, or heard your voice. You have been "God's instrument to teach me the way of salva-"tion; and now I die in hope, through the merits " of my Saviour, of a joyful resurrection." If such should be my privilege this day—if any of you who are present at this interesting service, should be able to salute me with such words, or if in that day when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, you should be amongst my crowns of rejoicing, what language can set forth the privilege of having this morning this grace given to me, to preach unto you the unsearchable riches of Christ?

I might mention another reason for the apostle's high estimate of this grace given to him, that it afforded the privilege of doing that which is the joy and great delight of all who love his name—the privilege of sounding forth the praises of the Lord, and exalting him in the great congregation. For love delights in praise, since praise is the flower of love. As envy sickens at another's joy, so love's delight is to magnify Him whom the soul loveth. This is one reason why heaven is so full of praise—that the seraphs burning with love, and the redeemed saints feeling an affection which even a seraph cannot have.—Blessed as they always are, their joy becomes still more ecstatic when their harps are strung, and their voices raised to praise the Lord. Yes, my beloved brethren, this is a privilege which his faithful servants have, when preaching "the unsearchable riches of Christ," the privilege of sounding forth his praise, who is so worthy of all honour, that if the powers of the gifted minds of all the angels were concentrated in one mind, and their harmonious voices so blended, that all their sweetness was combined in one song of praise, this glorious anthem would fall far, far below their lofty theme.

> "For when they raise their highest notes, His love can ne'er be told."

No-

"Wisdom and strength are his alone, Stupendous rich and sovereign grace. Honour has raised his lofty throne, And glory brightens in his face."

Let me then, my beloved brethren, in concluding my discourse, be permitted "to stir up

your pure minds, by way of remembrance," by earnestly recommending you to view your ministry, as the inspired apostle did his—namely, by counting it as your high privilege—yea, as an unspeakable blessing—a grace which no language can fully express, or even an angel's mind conceive, that the Lord has put you in trust with the Gospel, and that TO YOU—TO YOU IS THIS GRACE GIVEN, "to preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ."

As you reflect upon your own individual state as a sinner, and at the same time remember that " having forgiven you all trespasses," God has called "you out of darkness into his marvellous light"you will enter into the feelings of the apostle, when he said, "The love of Christ constraineth us; for we thus judge that if one died for all, then were all dead, and that he died for all, that they that live should not live unto themselves, but for him that died for them and rose again." This love will make it you great delight to win souls for Him-souls that may adorn his doctrine in this life, and add to the number of the jewels in his crown in that which is to come. God grant that this may be your high privilege, that you may have such success in your ministry, that you may never speak in vain.

If in publicly confessing his name, you should at times meet with the scorn and reproach of the ungodly, let the thought that you are his servants lead you to seek a resemblance to your divine Lord and Master. He "for the joy that was set "before Him, endured the cross, and despised the "shame, and is now set down at the right hand "of the throne of God."

Seek then, my beloved brethren, by earnest fervent prayer, yea, by prayer so earnest, that, not satisfied with your ordinary petitions to a throne of grace, you set apart special seasons of prayer particularly devoted to this object—seek, I repeat it, the mind of the apostle as to your ministry, or his high estimate of the grace given to him. If there ever was a season when the ministers of Christ are called boldly to preach the truth, and without reserve to make known the unsearchable riches of Christ, now is that season. For such is the present convulsed state of Christendom,-such the effects of that mighty earthquake which is now shaking almost every throne, that no one can say how near the day of the Lord may be; or how short a period may remain before "He shall come to take vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Faithful to your Master, you need not fear. For should the last great conflict soon commence—and in these days when popery, lawlessness, and infidelity are exerting themselves to their utmost to injure his cause, should that prophetic word be fulfilled,* "These shall make war with

^{*} Revelation xvii. 14.

the Lamb," remember it is added, "the Lamb shall overcome them, for He is Lord of lords, and King of kings; and they that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful."

Yes, my beloved brethren, CALLED, as you will this day confess yourselves to be, to this office and ministry. Chosen, as you are to be his special servants to feed and provide for his family. FAITHFUL to your Lord, as we have no doubt, and earnestly pray you may be. Let this animate your spirits with fresh courage-you ARE ON THE CONQUEROR'S SIDE. For "He must reign till he hath put all enemies under his Strive then to realize the day when feet." He shall appear; and when, sitting on his glorious throne, accompanied by innumerable hosts of angels, He shall call you before Him, and with his heart full of love, and his countenance beaming with delight, shall thus address you, "Well done, good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

"Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory, with exceeding joy; to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, now and for ever. Amen."

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DO YET MORE.

ASERMON

PREACHED

AT CHRIST CHURCH, ST. PANCRAS,

ON

SUNDAY EVENING, JUNE 26TH, 1848,

IN AID OF THE FUNDS FOR

BUILDING A NEW CHURCH

IN THAT DISTRICT.

BI

WILLIAM JAMES STRACEY, M.A.

FELLOW OF MAGDALENE COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

Published in aid of the Funds for a New Church.

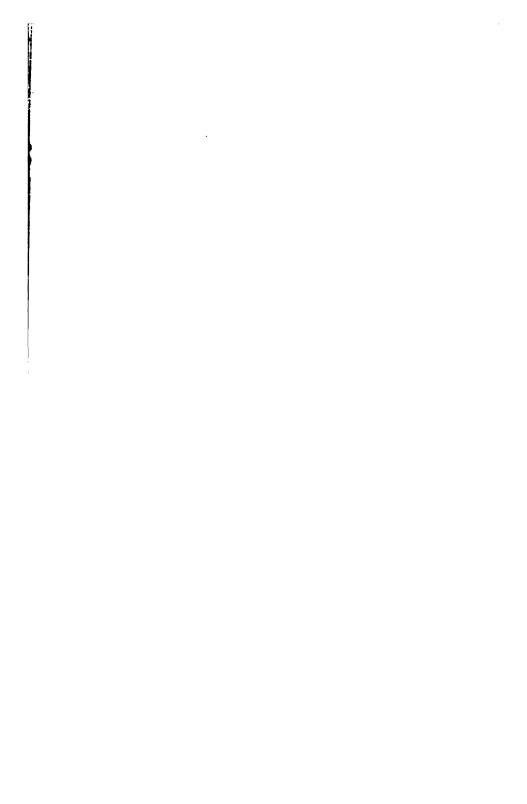
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SERMON.

1 CHRONICLES XXIX. 16, 17, 18.

"O Lord our God, all this store that we have prepared to build Thee an house for Thine holy name cometh of Thine hand, and is all Thine own. I know also, my God, that Thou triest the heart, and hast pleasure in uprightness. As for me, in the uprightness of mine heart I have willingly offered all these things: and now have I seen with joy Thy people, which are present here, to offer willingly unto Thee. O Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, our fathers, keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of Thy people, and prepare their heart unto Thee."

BEFORE I endeavour to draw your attention, brethren, to one or two short remarks connected with these words, and to the object for which the collection was made this morning, and is to be made this evening, viz. that of building a New Church in this district, there is one remark which cannot be too often repeated, or too often urged upon your recollection.

We live in days of deep and bitter controversy, where the best men are worst spoken of, and the holiest mysteries of the faith are openly discussed with little reverence or meekness; and this, too, not by the world of unbelievers and of careless ones, but by

men who have received the same holy baptism, and profess the same holy faith as ourselves. While I would call upon you, therefore, to abstain from doing the same, and would bid you return blessing for cursing, I would remind you that a very large proportion of existing disputes and controversies arises mainly from the *imperfection* and *indefiniteness* of terms and language. To make this plain, let me direct your attention to one or two instances.

Most of the opposition, and chief of the objections, to the great doctrine upon which all holiness of life must be built, recognised as it is by every epistle which is addressed to "saints and faithful brethren," viz. that of Baptismal Regeneration, arise from confounding the term or effects of regeneration with the term or effects of conversion or renewal. Now regeneration implies a change of state or relationship to God; conversion or renewal is a change of heart. Regeneration is at once complete and can never be repeated; conversion, even in the holiest of men, is never finished and complete on this side the grave. Regeneration is the work of God, bestowed through an outward and visible sign by the ministerial agency of man; conversion is the work of God's Holy Spirit upon the heart, the man himself co-operating with the blessed influence of God. Regeneration may be received passively, as in the case of infants; conversion must have the active concurrence of the receiver. The quilt of original and past sin is blotted out in regeneration. The effects and consequence of original sin in disposition, and inclination or proneness to sin,

is gradually, more or less, opposed and overcome in conversion.

And so again, from the imperfection of terms and phrases commonly used, the great doctrine of Justification by Faith is often represented as opposed to a judgment at the last great day, according to works. Yet why should these things be? We all know that "we are accounted righteous before God, only for the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ, by faith and not for our own works or deservings." Justification may be shortly defined as reconciliation with God: as non-imputation of sin—as the not having our sins imputed to us for Christ's sake: that as before we could not please God, so now after justification "God is not unrighteous to forget your works and labour that proceedeth of love:" "with such sacrifices He is well pleased." Justification terminates with the day of judgment; whereas rewards are for ever and I will notice but one other instance of the same kind.

Nearly allied to this last error of opposing justification by faith to a reward hereafter according to our works, is that of confounding references, which there are in many parts of Scripture, to the ceremonial law of Moses with the law of Christian obedience and good works and holiness of life. As, e. g. when we read, "But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident; for, the just shall live by faith." Here we may be tempted to confound the law of Christian obedience with the Judaical law of ceremonies, to which the passage

refers, and to confine faith merely to feeling, and to make it less than a vital principle operating upon the heart, and overruling all our actions and thoughts and words. But they who do so surely forget that God has an endless difference of rewards in store for us, manifold more even than in this world. "As one star differeth from another star in glory, so also is the resurrection of the dead." To judge angels, to sit on thrones, to have rule over ten cities, or five cities, or two cities, is no more than Daniel had announced five centuries before, when he declared, in words of inspiration, "they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmanent; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." Woe be unto you if your faith, when weighed in the balances of the Son of God, be found only feeling, or bare assent to truths. For devils do more than this. They do not believe only, but tremble.

And now I turn shortly to consider the text: there are two points especially to be observed in the accounts which we have in several places of Holy Scripture of the rule by which offerings to God especially for the building and service of His temple are to be made; and in the examples which are given us amongst the saints of the elder or later covenant. Observe then, first, the willing spirit in which such offerings were made of old. We all know that it is the heart of man to which God mostly looks. In these days our risk rather is to make a presumed inward devotion, and what is termed spirituality of mind, usurp the place of outward acts of holy living, and to separate

true devotion to God from good works which must accompany it. Our rule is given us: "Let every man do according as he is disposed in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity, for God loveth a cheerful giver." And again: "If there be first a willing heart, it is accepted according as a man hath, and not according as he hath not." And then turn to the example set us in this chapter of the book of Chronicles: "Moreover, because I have set my affection to the house of my God, I have of mine own proper good, of gold and silver, which I have given to the house of my God, over and above all that I have prepared for the holy house, even three thousand talents of gold, of the gold of Ophir, and seven thousand talents of refined silver, to overlay the walls of the houses withal: the gold for things of gold, and silver for things of silver, and for all manner of work to be made by the hands of artificers. then is willing to consecrate his service this day unto the Lord? Then the chief of the fathers and princes of the tribes of Israel, and captains of thousands and of hundreds, with the rulers of the king's work offered willingly, and gave for the service of the house of God of gold five thousand talents and ten thousand drams, and of silver ten thousand talents, and of brass eighteen thousand talents, and one hundred thousand talents of iron. And they with whom precious stones were found gave them to the treasure of the house of the Lord. Then the people rejoiced for that they offered willingly, because with

a perfect heart they offered willingly to the Lord; and David the king also rejoiced with great joy."

Observe, secondly, the devoted and self-denying spirit in which such costly thank-offerings to God were made. We have an express warning given us in Holy Scripture against letting our love to God and good works grow cold: and we have many instances left us for our encouragement in eager devotedness to God. Such a spirit was David's, when, in another part of his history than that to which the text refers, we read, "And the king said unto Araunah, Nay; but I will surely buy it of thee at a price: neither will I offer burnt-offerings unto the Lord my God of that which doth cost me nothing. So David bought the threshing-floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver." Or call to mind, "how he sware unto the Lord, and vowed a vow unto the Almighty God of Jacob: I will not come within the tabernacle of mine house, nor climb up into my bed: I will not suffer mine eyes to sleep nor mine eyelids to slumber, neither the temples of my head to take any rest, until I find out a place for the temple of the Lord, an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob." And the same spirit, overflowing with the grace of God, has left for our example amongst the earliest records of the one Apostolic Church: "Neither was there any that lacked; for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold and laid them at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every

man according as he had need. And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas, a Levite and of the country of Cyprus, having land, sold it, and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet."

My brethren, think you that these few instances, which I have recited, were recorded for aught else than for our admonition and example and imitation? I would, then, bring these words more immediately home to ourselves: I wish heartily to impress upon all who hear me, more and more the necessity of increased self-denial and self-devotion and self-exertion in these days, and more particularly in you, brethren, with reference to the proposed New Church in this district. Put your heart more in the subject than it has ever been before: let each look to it, as though it depended upon his own exertion and his own selfdenial. We are too apt in these days to undervalue our own individual responsibility and power to accomplish great works: some from thoughtlessness, some from a mistaken fear of being thought to place themselves too prominent, and some from a habit of looking on and admiring whilst others do the work. We do not enough bear in mind, that for the sake of ten righteous men God would have spared the cities of the plain. Or, again, those words which each holy day are sounded in our ears: "For I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, and visit the sins of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and show mercy unto thousands in them that love me, and keep my commandments." Blot it not out from the book

of your recollection, that we do indeed owe an especial thank-offering to God, that we have been spared hitherto amid the confusion and anarchy which have wellnigh swept away all the old land-marks and customs of the world with the besom of destruction. Amid repeated threatenings of disturbance and revolution at home, - amid the extremes of poverty and wealth which surround us,-let it not be forgotten, that here has not one shot been fired for the peace of the metropolis, or the safety of the State. Be assured that thankfulness to God for past mercies received, is the best guarantee that we can have that He has yet future mercies in store for us. And I would urge it upon each one who is present, that the future safety and security of this mighty empire, both at home and abroad, may depend entirely upon the exertions of comparatively a few within the next few years.

Perplexity—one foretold sign of the last times—triumphs beyond our own shores: and they who see far may trace the shadows of the like or greater troubles which threaten us. To prevent this, or at least arrest its course, must be sought in providing that the people of these lands be christianly and virtuously brought up, and be taught that it is God's law which man may not alter, that all should learn to "honour all men, love the brotherhood, fear God, and honour the king." Let us learn ourselves, and let us teach others that to submit ourselves, and to be subject and patient and resigned, even when we suffer unjustly, is as much in accordance with God's

will, as to be contentious and striving and impatient of control is opposed to it. For such is the spirit which the Church of God would inculcate and teach.

But look around, brethren: we have not only to provide for a population vastly, I might almost say awfully, increasing day by day; but we are already surrounded by a heathen population which it is fearful to contemplate. The following calculation, made but a few weeks since, in a Cathedral city, with thirty-six churches and the Cathedral, and a population of about sixty-five thousand, it was found, as near as I remember, that the whole number who entered the doors of a Church on one particular Sunday, was some where about eight thousand: of dissenting places of worship, of all creeds and kinds, about seven thousand. Of this number, there were many, doubtless, who went at least twice in the same day. And when from this small proportion we deduct all who have never duly received holy baptism, nor savingly partaken of the holy communion of the Body and Blood of Christ, it is a number too fearful to calculate. And shall these things be, brethren? and can we expect God's favour to be continued to us here, or his mercy hereafter, if we do not our best to save those, whom the Lord of Glory came down in our flesh and died to save? And are your hearts stirred up when you hear your duty and responsibility before God plainly put before you? And do you ask, "And what can we do?" At this time you will find your answer in the building and endowment of a new house, dedicated to the honour and glory

of God. You will find it in making here on earth another type of heaven, where rich and poor shall meet as children of the same Father, and members of the same one body, training here amid the beauty of holiness to join in the not more real, though more perfect, praises of God in heaven. Imprint, then, upon your minds the words self-denial and self-ex-Search for yourselves a path in which to serve God better, and he will direct you. "He will guide you with His counsel; and after that receive you with glory." He will lead you in new and untried paths, in which you may follow Him in lowly well-doing and greater works of mercy. Why is this admonition given except to be obeyed; and why repeated except for its importance? "Sell that ye have and give alms: provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth. For where your treasure is there will your heart be also."

And are there none amongst you, brethren, who live in grandeur where you might live more humbly, but yet do as much for man and more for God? Are there none who live in a great house where a less would make less show indeed in the world, but serve equally as well? Are there none, e. g., who use two horses where one would be sufficient? or, are there none who have works of art, not possessing the endearment of being the recollection of departed worth and excellence? None with gold and pearls and costly things?

Let no one in any wise so situated say they have no way in which to do more for God, to promote His kingdom upon earth, or provide for His poor. "Sell what ye have, and give alms," will effectually silence objections of the kind.

Or are there none present, servants to those who live in plenty and are well provided for themselves? Your temptation may be to think that you have nothing else to do than to lay by in order to be one day independent yourselves. Be assured that, while we may not neglect prudent and trustful means, the best investment, and your only security, is in offerings made to God. He will be no man's debtor. you or any hold, they will hold only so long and so much as He pleases. Be persuaded that you do not live in a class between those who have to provide for the poor, and those who receive bounty. If you have enough, take heed that you find some portion over and above to spare for God's service. If every Jew was bound to return a tithe—that is, one shilling out of every ten-to the Giver of all good, how much more should that at least be required of us who live under the greater light of the Gospel, and are led by God's Spirit, and feed in our hearts by faith upon His Body and Blood? And let us all, brethren, bear in mind that whereas none are excused from promoting God's kingdom upon earth to the best of our ability; so should our deeds of mercy and charity be as regularly provided for and taken into account as any other expense which we daily have to calculate upon. Habits of worship and service of God: who bids you in his Master's words, "Forasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me;" and in the words of St. Paul, "Be not weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not:" and who would commend you to God with the admonition that the salvation of many, many souls may depend upon the self-denial and self-exertion of each of you, at this particular crisis in the world.

"Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

The End.

LIBERTY, EQUALITY,

AND

FRATERNITY:

A SHORT AND SIMPLE METHOD BY WHICH THESE THREE GRAND OBJECTS MAY BE GAINED.

A SERMON

PREACHED IN ST. THOMAS'S CHURCH, STOCKPORT,
On Sunday, April 23rd.

BY THE REV. JOSEPH TAYLOR, M.A., INCUMBENT.

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1848.

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LIBERTY, EQUALITY,

AND

FRATERNITY.

1 Peter II. 13-17.

"Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: as free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. Honour all same. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the King."

In these times of excitement and commotion, you will probably expect to hear from me some allusion to what is now passing around and in the midst of us. As a general rule, I do not think it consistent with the solemnity of public worship to take notice of passing events; for the church is not a lecture-room or arena of political discussion; and within its sacred walls no other sounds but those of prayer and praise, the exposition of Christian doctrine, and the inculcation of Christian duties, ought in general to be heard. Still there are exceptions to this rule; and I conceive that the

extraordinary times in which we live, and the revolutionary spirit which is abroad—having begun in a neighbouring country and thence communicated its infection throughout a great part of the continent of Europe, and even to our own favoured island—these things, I conceive, will fully justify me in referring to the present aspect of affairs, and to our duties in this crisis. Nay, more: when the highest authorities of the realm have enjoined us to pray for "the maintenance of peace and tranquillity "-when, in that beautiful prayer (which was offered up in this morning's service), we besought Almighty God "to continue His favour to this land, and to preserve us alike from foreign enemies and domestic divisions "-it would be a culpable neglect on my part, and I should be shrinking from my duty, if I did not endeavour, by exhortations from the pulpit, to give effect to that prayer.

Now, if there be one point more clearly laid down than another in Scripture it is this—viz., that submission and obedience to the legitimate and constituted authorities is an essential part of Christian duty:—"Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punish-

ment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: as free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the King" (1 Pet. ii. 13-17).

The Scripture, you will observe, gives no rules for the establishment of any particular kind or form of government: with the questions of monarchies, or republics, or democracies, or mixed forms of government, it meddles not; but it inculcates the duty of subjection to that form which it finds established: we are to submit "to " the higher powers "-" the powers that be "-on this ground, because it is the ordinance of God:-"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever, therefore, resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God Wherefore, ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake"i. e., we must obey the established laws, and submit to the legitimate authorities of the State, not merely from a principle of fear and because of the terror of the law hanging over us, but from a higher motive-from a conscientious motive-because, in so doing, we are obeying God. It is the ordinance of God, and to resist that ordinance is to resist God Himself.

Now, one might have supposed that, when St. Paul wrote these words to his Roman converts. and laid down this principle of obedience to the civil power in such unqualified terms, there was probably a most excellent king on the throne; but it was quite the contrary. History informs us that, at this very time, Nero was emperor, than whom there was scarcely ever a greater monster or a more cruel and sanguinary tyrant: he robbed the rich and murdered the poor; set fire to his own city—the city of Rome (equal in extent and population to London)—and laid the blame of it upon the Christians, in order that he might render them odious, and so put them to death by every kind of cruel and horrible torture; yet, notwithstanding, St. Paul's injunctions are positive and absolute:— "Be subject, obey, submit."

My brethren—I am not about to enter into any review of those events which have recently taken place in France; but as a disposition has been manifested in this country on the part of many persons to imitate them, and as there is still much discontent and disaffection brooding in the minds

of large masses of our countrymen—and whereas this discontent is fanned by the inflammatory harangues of designing and unscrupulous demagogues, agitators who pander to the ignorance and passions of the people for their own selfish purposes-I would rather hold up the example of France as a warning to be avoided, than as a temptation to be followed. Whoever is able to read. and form a correct opinion for himself, is satisfied that that country is only at the beginning of its troubles, and that what the end may be, it is impossible to foretel. She has plunged upon a vast and perilous experiment, and that she may come well out of the ordeal, we rather hope than believe: but, in passing through her trial, who can predict the misery and the horror she may have to endure? Those who are old enough to remember the former Revolution, or who are acquainted with its details from history or tradition, can but shudder at the thought of what may be coming upon that nation, while at the same time they fervently pray God of His mercy to avert it.

But knowing what we do of that people—arguing from the past to the future—judging that what has been may be again—can any one be so insane as to desire to propagate such principles in this

country? Before we talk of imitating them, let us wait to see whether their experiment succeeds. Besides, the circumstances and condition of this country are totally different from France.

I. One great object, for which they clamour so loudly, is "Liberty." If by liberty they mean license -the unrestrained permission for every one to do, not what is right in itself, but what is "right in his own eyes"-I can only say, that is a plant which they are welcome to keep on their own soil: but if by liberty they mean that rational and constitutional freedom which all members of the State are entitled to possess—if they mean liberty of speech, liberty of action, liberty to worship God according to their conscience, liberty to turn their talents, their trade, their industry, their capital to the best account—liberty to express their approbation or disapprobation of the measures of the Government -liberty to seek, by constitutional means and in a constitutional spirit, for amelioration of the laws. diminution of taxation, or other political changes —if this is the liberty they mean, then, I say, we in this country have the happiness to enjoy this liberty to the fullest extent: it is the birth-right of every Briton. The nations of the continent are only now groping after that liberty which we have long cherished, and which we now look upon as

our inalienable possession. And what, let me ask, is the great charter of our liberties? It is the British Constitution; and upon what is that Constitution founded ?-upon the word of God. This, then, is the material point. Republicans and Chartists may brawl for liberty as much as they please, but what says the word of God ?- "From whence come wars and fightings among you?" Now, mark the answer: not because rulers are bad-not because governors are corrupt—not because laws are oppressive or taxes burdensome; but "come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?" Yes, here is the root of the matter: so long as you are the servants of sin—the slaves of evil passions, tyrannized over by lawless and rebellious desires—you never can be free. It is not the Government or the Constitution, under which we live, which can give us freedom; but it is the truth as it is in Jesus Christ :-- "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed, and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free " (John viii. 31, 32).

The man who is under the dominion of evil passions, or blind prejudice, or vicious principle, or any besetting sin whatever, would be a slave in the purest democracy that was ever imagined in the brain of man; while the holy soul, governed by reason, enlightened by the Gospel, disciplined in the faith and guided by the Spirit of God, would be free even in the most despotic empire. It is sin, ignorance, error, selfishness, lust, prejudice, "the evil eye," which make slaves of us all: it is the glorious Gospel of the blessed God which sets us free. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."

II. But another cry which has been set up in France, and which has been echoed in this country, is "Equality!" Now, if by equality it is meant to reduce all classes in the community to one common level, the idea is simply ridiculous and absolutely impossible. Such a thing never has been nor ever If it were possible, even in theory, to can be. imagine such a state of things, as that all the inhabitants of this or any other country could rise up to-morrow morning in perfect equality, it would come to an end before the day was over. men equal in talent, equal in industry, equal in painstaking, equal in carefulness, equal in bodily strength, equal in mental endowments, equal in natural capacity, equal in virtuous and holy deeds? Then, how can any laws of man contravene the laws of Nature and of God? Does not Nature

herself present one great and splendid picture of inequality? What are her hills and vallies, the differences of soil, the varieties of climate, the giant forests, the dwarfish woods?—what are our oceans, rivers, lakes, brooks?—what is all this wondrous, endless, variety which encompasses us on every side but a perpetual testimony to this great truth, that inequality is one of the primæval laws of God, impressed upon the world at its creation by the fiat of the Almighty's hand? You might as well attempt to reduce and pare down the inequalities of the earth's surface to one dead level of uniformity as to render the social system one of perfect equality.

It is true that in one sense all are equal, in that all are sinners: it is true that in another sense all are equal, in that all have been redeemed by the same blood of Christ: in the truest and highest sense then—viz., as members of Christ, as children of God, as citizens of a spiritual kingdom, as having one Saviour, one Spirit, one God and Father of all, one hope of glory, one common home and country, eternal in the heavens—in this respect all men are equal; but to assert equality in any other sense is a mere fallacy. If, then, these visionaries, who are so clamorous for equality, would but scatter

their wild schemes to the wind, and return to the good old paths of the Bible, they would realize, and more than realize, all that their fondest fancy ever pictured. Any other equality but that which is taught by Jesus Christ and His apostles is sure to prove a disappointment and delusion—a sort of splendid mirage, which, at a distance, looks fair, beautiful, inviting, tempting to the weary traveller as he crosses the desert; but, when he approaches it, it vanishes away. Where can the human soul quench its feverish thirst, and allay its inappeasable cravings, but by drinking of those waters which flow from Siloah's rock? Where can the heart of man, with its perpetual unrest and its inextinguishable ambition, find repose but in Him who has said, "Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest?" Where can the all-devouring want, which preys upon the immortal spirit, be satisfied except by Him who says, "Look unto me, all ye ends of the earth, and be ye saved?"

III. Another popular cry of the day is for "Fraternity." The meaning of this is, that all men are brethren—a beautiful idea, but not quite so new as the Revolutionists and Chartists would seem to imagine. If they would read their Bibles, they would find it there said—"Sirs, ye are

brethren; why do ye wrong one to another" (Acts vii. 26). They would find it also written in another place—"There is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all" (Col. iii. 11). Again, they would find it written—"There is one body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all" (Eph. iv. 4-6). And still more to the purpose, they would find such words as these—"Love the brotherhood" (1 Pet. ii. 17.)

But they would find also that there can be no fraternity without subordination—that order is heaven's first law—that gradations of rank and station are necessary to the existence of human society; and that that wisdom which would subvert this order, and disturb these mutual relations and dependencies, "descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish." And, perhaps, they would consider that it was not a very fraternal act for the French people to expel fifteen thousand English workmen from their soil without any warning given, without a moment's notice, without paying them their wages, without allowing

them time to collect their small earnings, or even to provide the commonest necessaries for their journey; and these poor creatures must, many of them, have perished of starvation and destitution, had it not been for the timely succour afforded them by the voluntary offerings of charitable Englishmen and Englishwomen, but not of those people who brawl out for "Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity" in the corners of the streets and in the public thoroughfares.

My brethren-There are those who maintain that all these things, which are now taking place, are a fulfilment of the prophecies of holy writ, a token of a general apostacy from the truth, and a prelude to the coming of Antichrist. I have not time to examine the truth of this opinion; but I may observe, in conclusion, that it is scarcely possible to witness such a confederacy of evil as is now organising itself, and marshalling its hosts from all parts of the world, without suspecting that there is a higher power behind the scenes. And who can that power be but "the prince of this world that worketh in the children of disobedience?" Far be it from any of us to be of those simple ones who are taken in his net-far be it from us to be seduced with the fair promises in which Satan

is sure to hide his poison! Do you think he is so unskilful in his craft as to ask you openly and plainly to join him in his warfare against the truth? No: he offers you baits to tempt you; he promises you civil liberty—he promises you equality—he promises you trade and wealth—he promises you a remission of taxes—he promises you the maximum of wages and the minimum of "This is the way in which he conceals from you the kind of work to which he is putting you: he tempts you to rail against your rulers and superiors: he does so himself and induces you to imitate him. Or he promises you illumination: he offers you knowledge, science, philosophy, enlargement of mind: he scoffs at times gone by-he scoffs at every institution which reveres them: he prompts you what to say, and then listens to you, and praises you, and encourages you: he bids you mount aloft: he shows you how to become as gods. Then he laughs and jokes with you, and gets intimate with you-he takes your hand, and gets his fingers between yours and grasps them, and then you are his."

Shall we—Christians, sons of God, brethren of Christ, heirs of glory—shall we allow ourselves to have lot or part in this matter? Shall we, even

with our little finger, help on the mystery of iniquity which is travailing for birth and convulsing the earth with its pangs?

"Oh! my soul, come not thou into their secret: unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united!" "What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? What concord hath Christ with Belial?—or, what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate; and touch not the unclean thing," lest you be workers together with God's enemies, and so come to utter perdition both here and hereafter.

William Edward Painter, 342, Strand, London.

THE CONTINUING CITY:

A SERMON,



PREACHED IN ST JAMES' CHAPEL, LEITH, ON APRIL 16, 1848,
BEING THE SUNDAY AFTER THE FUNERAL OF

THE RIGHT REV. MICHAEL RUSSELL, LL.D., D.C.L., OXON,
BISHOP OF GLASGOW AND GALLOWAY.

Β¥

C. H. TERROT, D.D.,

BISHOP OF RDINBURGII.

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MURRAT AND GIBB, PRINTERS, EDINBURGH.

SERMON.

HEB. XIII. 14.—For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.

THE Apostle is here writing to Jews who had received the gospel of Jesus Christ, and who, in consequence, had been, or were expecting to be, expelled from the society of their kinsmen and fellow-countrymen,—to be driven, as he expresses it, without the camp, bearing the reproach of Jesus; and he exhorts them to bear this trial with patience, on the consideration that here they had no continuing city, but were seeking one to come.

I shall not, brethren, pursue any farther this primary application of the text. Whatever our temptations may be, they are of a very different character from those by which the converted Hebrews of the first century were tried. We are not called upon to leave the camp, to abandon house and home, parents and relatives, wife and children for Christ's sake, as they were—we are under no temptation to deny or conceal our belief in Jesus as the true Messiah; and surrounded as we are by temptations to do much that is wrong, and to leave undone much that is right, we may, I think, occupy our time more profitably than in examining

the character and bearings of a temptation to which, it is probable, we shall never be exposed.

But the ground on which they were to resist their particular temptation, is of so extensive an application as to suit our case just as well as it suited theirs; and this ground, you will observe, consists of two parts, the one negative—"for here have we no continuing city;" the other positive—"but we seek one to come;" and it is now my purpose, brethren, to consider how the frequent and serious contemplation of these two propositions is necessary and serviceable to us, in protecting us against the temptations, guiding us amidst the difficulties, and supporting us under the afflictions which are, more or less, the lot of every man that cometh into the world.

The first and negative proposition is absolutely and universally true, whether we believe it or not—whether we think of it or not; its truth depends not upon the fluctuating state of our thoughts and opinions, but upon the eternal, unchangeable nature of things. We have here no abiding city. Nothing in this world is abiding. Every thing, whether in nature or in art, is in a progress of advancement or of decay. Nay, the world itself is but a temporary residence for a temporary race of beings; and when it has served its purpose, it, and the very elements of which it is composed, shall melt away with fervent heat, and be transformed into another world, under another law, and for other purposes, and with other inhabitants.

But the usual, and, I think, the just and practical view of this matter, is not to think so much of the final dissolution of the material world, as of our own personal dissolution. Could we persuade ourselves by any course of false reasoning that the world in which we live was destined by God for an eternal and unchanging existence, that would not in any degree weaken the conviction, that here we have no continuing city. We, at any rate, are not to continue inhabitants of this world for ever; our connexion with it is manifestly temporary. We are born, and live, and die, and then our connexion with the world and its occupations ceases for ever.

Now, every body knows this. Every body occasionally thinks of it; but many, I fear, think of it only when they cannot help thinking of it. The thought is painful to them; and they see no practical good purpose that it can serve. They are engaged in schemes of business requiring labour for the present, and forethought as to the future; and they feel that to reflect upon death, to consider that all this labour and forethought may be entirely thrown away, serves only to diminish their interest in life, and to damp their exertions in the course of honest and useful industry.

Such a view would be reasonable if it were true that our business in life was to pass through it as successfully, as pleasantly, and as harmlessly as possible. If we only knew that we have no abiding city here, without any knowledge or hopes of an abiding city elsewhere, it would be reasonable to make the most of that which we are sure of, and to say with the Epicureans of old, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." But this is not our true position. Even, by nature and instinct, the soul of man feels that it has a longer date, and a higher destiny, thancan be comprised in the

few years of its earthly existence. Even the rudest barbarians who have most completely lost the traces of original tradition, and on whom no ray of the light of revelation has gleamed, have still some anticipations of an unknown futurity; and look forward with hope, or with fear, to something beyond the grave. It has been only where a false philosophy has quenched the light of nature, and failed to produce any light to supply its place, that men have been reduced to the melancholy condition of considering this transitory world as the sum of their existence,—and thus to seek their highest happiness in nothing better than in shutting their eyes to the most certain and most painful fact, that in the midst of life they are in death—that here they have no abiding city.

While, then, all men in all ages and in every state, agree, and must for ever agree, in admitting the truth of the first proposition, it appears that they differ very widely in respect to the tone of feeling excited by it—to some it is a most melancholy consideration, which they labour to banish from their minds—to others it is a fountain of hope and joy—and this difference arises from their being able or unable to assert with truth the second proposition, "But we seek one to come."

And here, brethren, I would have you to attend particularly to the choice of terms. The Apostle does not say, There is one to come; that might or might not be a support under the trials, and a compensation for the shortness of life, according as that which is to come appears suited to our wants, and wishes, and capacities of enjoyment. But he says, We seek one to come; as much as to say, the future

state which God has promised to us, and in which we firmly believe, is something which we do not merely expect, but something that we hope for and desire. We believe that it is a state far better than any thing which can be attained upon earth; nay, that the good things of this life have no real value, and can afford no rational happiness, unless as they are taken in connexion with, and are rendered conducive to its attainment; and, therefore, we do not merely expect, but we seek for that abiding city which is to come; and though the search may be a work of difficulty, and even should it involve, as in the time when our text was written it certainly did involve, much immediate sacrifice and danger, still we seek it, because, in addition to all other desirable properties which it may possess, it is that which it is impossible we should find on earth-it is a continuing city.

Still, brethren, I must dwell upon the distinction between the two portions of our text. The first portion of it is universally true. The man who never bestowed a thought upon eternity, if there be such a man—those who are engrossed with the frivolities of fashion, or with the sterner occupations of business or ambition—those who fear nothing but poverty, and those who have no hope but to get on in the world—all such, though they cling to time, and the things of time, with all their heart, and mind, and soul, and strength, know, and are painfully conscious that they neither have, nor can have an abiding city here.

But, then, the second part is not thus universally true. The Apostle says, We seek one to come. In the former portion, the We meant the whole human race without distinction.

tion or exception—but here the case is very different. The whole human race is not seeking a continuing city to Most men undoubtedly have a vague belief in some such future state of continuance, and indulge a vague hope that somehow or other they may attain to the enjoyment of it. But that is a very different thing from seeking for it from making it an object of serious and anxious pursuita something which we may attain, or which we may fail of obtaining-and in which success or failure is eternal life or eternal death to our souls. We cannot therefore say, We seek one to come, in the same broad unlimited sense in which we say, Here have we no continuing city. When the Apostle said, We, he had a determined, limited meaning-We Christians. Probably he had a special view to the circumstances of their time and position. Short as the time of man upon earth is, still it is something to pass that time in rest and security; to have a reasonable assurance, that our relations with society shall not be broken up, that we shall not be driven from house and home. But the Christians whom the Apostle addressed had no such assurance—both prophecy and observation, and very probably their own personal experience had taught them, that even in this worldly conventional sense, they had no abiding city upon earth, but must expect to migrate from town to town, as the outbreaks of persecution drove them hither and thither over the face of the earth. On the other hand, identifying himself with them, he could say with precision and certainty, we seek one to come—for all their peculiar uncertainty as to the continuance of their earthly homes arose from the honesty and intelligence with which they were seeking one to come.

We may doubt of our neighbours, and, what is more to the purpose, we may doubt of ourselves, whether our Christianity is nominal or real. But when men sacrifice, as the early Christians did, security and wealth, and honourable employments, and social and family ties for Christ's sake—when they gave up every possession and hope in this life; it would have been very unreasonable to doubt their veracity, when they declared that they did so because they were seeking and hoped to find a better country, even a heavenly.

We, on the other hand, brethren, have not made, and by God's merciful providence we have not been called upon to make, any such painful sacrifices; and, therefore, we must have further evidence, in respect of ourselves and of one another, before we can say with the assurance that the Apostle did-We seek one to come. We are under much temptation to forget that we are only strangers and pilgrims upon earth. We are very apt to be so engrossed with schemes of ambition or business, with plans for the temporal benefit of ourselves, or of our children, or to be so satisfied in the enjoyment of a well-secured independence, as practically to act as if we were convinced that here we had an abiding city. It is, therefore, necessary for us to try and examine ourselves in this matter; for if the daily course of our thoughts and actions do not proceed upon the conviction that nothing earthly is abiding, and unless this conviction lead us to lay up treasure in heaven,—then we are not of that class of persons whom the Apostle in our text speaks of as we, or in other words, we do not possess one of the essential characteristics which he, and the Spirit of God speaking by him, viewed as an indispensable portion of the Christian character.

Of course, brethren, you will not so misunderstand me as to think that the doctrine I am propounding is, that the one thing needful is our seeking for admission into heaven, no respect being paid to the method and means whereby we are seeking it. The New Testament itself does not propound the whole of the gospel in any one chapter, and a minister of the gospel, rightly dividing the word of truth, must necessarily confine himself to particular points on particular occasions. I feel assured, brethren, that you have not now to be informed that if a man seeks for admission into heaven in an unwarranted reliance on the unconditional, uncovenanted mercy of God, he will seek in vain,—that if he seeks for it as the payment of a meritorious obedience offered by him, and accepted by God, he will seek in vain,—that if he seeks it any way but as purchased by Christ's obedience unto death, and through him granted to all those who believe in, and love, and serve him, he will seek it in vain.

But, my brethren, I have hitherto been speaking, and am still speaking, upon a question previous to this of the proper way of seeking heaven. I am speaking of the necessity of seeking,—a necessity which we are all too apt to forget,—and which, such is the deceitfulness of the human heart, it is very possible that we may forget, even while we are discussing the value of the different methods in which it may, or in which it must, be sought for.

As, then, we are so apt to forget that which must be the foundation of all true practical religion, and as the neglect of the continuing city to come, arises not from an intellectual persuasion, for that is impossible, but from an unreasoning feeling that there is a continuance upon earth, God, in

his mercy to our souls, occasionally and frequently rouses us from this absurd dream, and forces us to feel, as well as to say, that we are strangers and pilgrims upon earth. Sometimes he thwarts the plans, on the success of which we were ready to say, "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years, take thine ease; eat, drink, and be merry." Sometimes he sends pains and weaknesses, which force us to remember that we bear about with us a body of sin and death; and sometimes, by taking to himself those who are nearest and dearest to us in our private circle, and those most useful and most honoured in public situations, he teaches us that even our best affections cannot find a secure resting-place upon earth, and that if we would be rationally happy in their exercise, we must set our affections upon things above, and look for the full and fearless enjoyment, even of our natural and social affections, not here, but in that happy and holy city whose maker and builder is God,-where those who now sow in tears shall reap in joy, - and where we, if we faithfully accept, and apply the offers of salvation and the means of grace that we now enjoy, shall again meet with all those who have departed hence in the faith and fear of God's holy name, and, with them, have our perfect consummation and bliss, both of body and soul, in Christ's eternal kingdom.

Such an interposition of God's providence to remind us of the uncertainty of life, and of the necessity of having our loins girt and our lights burning, we have all, my brethren, lately experienced, in the very sudden call by which he, who has for so many years been your friend and pastor, and my friend and colleague in the ministry, has been transferred from the toils and trials of this life, as we humbly trust and believe, to the rest which remaineth for the people of God. It would scarcely become me to speak to you, who had daily opportunities of observing his life and conversation, of the kindliness of his social affections; of what I have often felt to be the surprising extent of his pecuniary donations in charity; of his amiable and unassuming manners; and of his unwearied industry up to the last hour of his life, in the performance of all the duties of his office as your pastor.

Though I also have for more than thirty years had the pleasure and benefit of his acquaintance, it has only been during the last seven years, during which we have been associated together as Bishops in the Scottish Episcopal Church, that I understood fully the merits and the talents of the Bishop of Glasgow, and how thoroughly and how conscientiously he had turned those talents, which had earned for him so honourable a place in literature, into the channel which God's providence had now appointed for their exercise. That he met with difficulties and vexations, was a lot common to him with every one who in our day holds any office, whether of civil or ecclesiastical authority. That he overcame those difficulties, not so much by exerting the energies of his powerful mind in direct opposition, as by bearing and forbearing, yielding every thing of personal preference and inclination, but nothing of law and equity,-this was his peculiar merit, and the result was his peculiar reward. In the eleven years of his episcopate, the number of congregations in our communion within the Diocese of Glasgow has been doubled.

God has removed from our church, an able, discreet, and

conscientious ruler, at a time when wisdom and discretion are most urgently required. I feel, brethren, that I myself have sustained a loss which I can never hope to supply; I have lost a friend always accessible, with intelligence and long experience in all matters connected with our Church, kindly sympathizing with me in every trial, and ready to instruct, advise, or encourage me as the case might require.

But, my brethren, we shall make but a poor use of this striking visitation, if we merely indulge in vain regrets for the loss which most of us as individuals, and you all as a congregation, and the church at large has sustained in the removal of our revered friend and father in God. He died as he had lived, in the active exercise of the high duties to which God had called him—and may we not humbly hope, that the reason why he was spared the gradual weakening of prolonged life, or the pains and uneasiness of a progressive disease, was, that he needed neither—that God in mercy called him thus suddenly, because he was ready for the call?

Brethren, we pray to be delivered from sudden death—and we do so, because there is prevalent among us a consciousness that we are not prepared for death—that something is to be done, desirable at least, if not necessary, before we depart from this life and appear before God. But you must be aware that we cannot pray, with full assurance of faith, for any specific object but such as God has specifically promised to grant: and God has not promised that, if we desire it, he will remove us from this world by the agency of long and lingering disease. Our prayer is effectively answered, when by grace we are brought into a fitness to die; and therefore the purpose of this severe visitation as affects

us, is to inculcate the lesson, "Be ye also ready, for ye know not the hour or the day when the Lord will come." Search then your own hearts brethren, and weigh your own life and conversation in the balance of the sanctuary—see that you are indeed accepting and applying the great salvation set before you in the gospel—see that you have come to Christ in faith and love, and that you are daily coming to him for a participation in those treasures which by his precious blood-shedding he has purchased for his peoplecome to him by the renunciation of sin and self-will, by the prayer of faith, by the earnest study of God's word, and by humble reliance on the guidance of the Holy Spirit; and then you may be confident that neither your own weakness nor the strength of your spiritual enemies, nor life, however prolonged, nor death, however sudden, shall be able to separate you from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

THE END.

THE UNCHANGEABLENESS OF CHRIST.

SERMON,



PREACHED AT

DOWNING STREET CHAPEL, CAMBRIDGE,

ON JANUARY 30, 1848,

UPON THE OCCASION OF HIS RESIGNATION OF THE PASTORAL OFFICE.

BY

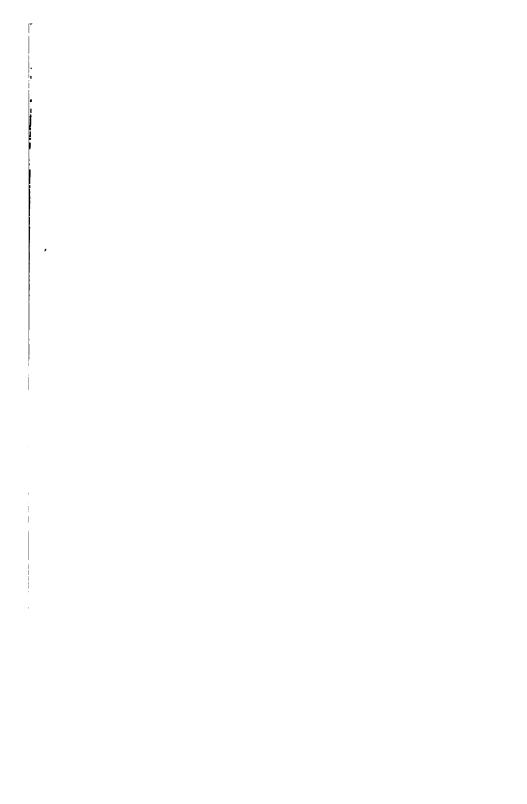
SAMUEL THODEY.

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J. AND J. DEIGHTON, AND ELIJAH JOHNSON, CAMBRIDGE.

MDCCCXLVIII.



The following discourse is committed to the press in conformity with the request of many friends, who wished to have a permanent record of a service which closed the ministerial engagements of twenty eight years. The author has endeavoured to adhere closely to the sermon as delivered; but, as some portions of it were unprepared, he cannot be sure that his memory has always recalled the exact expressions employed. He has ventured slightly to expand a part of the argument, bearing upon the divine nature of our blessed Lord, upon which, protracted as the service was, time forbade enlargement in preaching. A few brief notes and references are added, to support the statement in the text, and to direct the inquiries of those readers who might wish more fully to investigate the subject.

The author has not thought fit to advert to his reasons for relinquishing his pastoral charge, partly because they were fully stated in his letter of resignation, and partly because such a matter could scarcely be considered as possessing any great degree of interest to the public at large. In addressing his hearers for the last time, upon some of the most momentous truths in the range of Christian Theology, he was anxious that no minor considerations should interfere with the proper impression of the subject; and in preparing the discourse for the press, as a memorial of past labour, and as a testimony of his continued desire for their spiritual welfare, he was no less careful to exclude whatever might be foreign to that sacred and paramount design.

The delay that has occurred in the publication, has arisen from circumstances connected with a change of residence, and from numerous public engagements, which have made unexpected demands upon his time and attention. To Henry Smith, Esq., the much respected editor of the Cambridge Independent Press, who generously offered to print the discourse free of all expense, he cannot deny himself the pleasure of expressing his sense of grateful obligation.

It may be proper to state, that the allusion in the last sentence of the sermon, is to the author's brother, Mr. Joseph Thodey, who died at Cambridge, in the faith and hope of the Gospel, on the 27th of October, 1835, and was buried in front of the Chapel, where a small stone tablet is erected to his memory.

The author may be permitted to indulge the humble hope, that it may please the great Source of spiritual Influence, to follow with a blessing this attempt to advocate from the press, those doctrines which it has been the joy of his life, amidst much conscious imperfection, to inculcate with the living voice. All human interests are limited to a brief season. Life itself is but a passing shadow, and its most cherished objects will soon disappear, like the print of the pilgrim's foot upon the sand, which the next wave obliterates. But the truth itself partakes not of the instability of its recipients or of its advocates. "The word of the Lord endureth for ever; and this is the word which by the Gospel is preached unto you."

Camden Row, Camberwell, April, 1848.

SERMON.

HEBREWS XIII. 8.

JESUS CHRIST, THE SAME YESTERDAY, AND TO-DAY, AND FOR EVER.

THE influence of great names is extensively felt in every department of human society. Man is so constituted as to be insensibly governed, often for high purposes, by the actions and opinions of his fellow-men, who have evinced superiority, or acquired distinction. We love to see before us the character and example of those who have been eminent for wisdom or for worth; and we can never be insensible to the just claims of the world's benefactors. whether in earlier times or in our own. They shine upon us from afar, like bright stars from their throne of clouds, at once illustrating the past, and pointing the way to future improvement. They serve, at least, to remind us of the height to which humanity may attain, whether we aspire to reach it or not; whilst, on minds of kindred sensibility, they sometimes act with all the force of inspiration, prompting an intense desire and effort for the attainment of similar excellence. The names of the great lights of science, the intellectual princes of this world, the founders of literary dynasties, the men who have given laws to opinion, and enlarged the sum of human happiness, by multiplying the materials of useful contemplation, are long held in reverence by a grateful posterity. The Christian delights still more to think of patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and martyrs, "the long cloud of witnesses," who have conferred such essential benefits upon the world, whose memorial is recorded in the history of the church, and whose names are written in the Lamb's book of Life.

But what are these compared with the name of Christ? Shadows all! Our text calls off our attention from inferior forms of excellence to the contemplation of the great reality -that one Being, in whose presence nothing earthly can retain its brightness, and who stands unapproached and alone, alike in the transcendent perfections of his nature, and in the priceless benefits he has conferred. The name of Jesus is a name above every name, above every name on earth, and every name among the powers and principalities of the heavenly world. It were an impious mockery to weigh his name against theirs, or any other name against his, except for the purpose of pouring merited contempt upon the vaunted excellence of the creature, in comparison with that which is divine. All other greatness is dependent and derived, that of Jesus is essential and inherent. All human worth is marked by some imperfection, often seen in contrast with the very excellence by which the man is most distinguished; but in Jesus everything is consummate and complete. In men, the most admired qualities are separate, divided, and diffused, the most eminent individuals being distinguished by some single attribute, as Abraham for his faith, Moses for his meekness, Elijah for his zeal; but in Christ, that pure orb of unsullied light, all excellencies combine, as in their proper centre, and their native home. Among men, the higher qualities of character appear but seldom, and at best are brief and transitory, requiring auxiliary support, and liable to yield to the lightest breath of temptation; but in Him they are permanent, self-sustained, and changeless,

"the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." This unlimited perfection had been an object of grateful contemplation in itself, but it derives additional importance from the fact, that it is uniformly represented as essential to the accomplishment of his mission as the Saviour of the world. "For such an high priest became us, who was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens." *

To these introductory remarks, we are obviously led by the connexion of the text, in which it will be seen, that the Apostle commends to the Hebrews the character and course of those who had sustained office among them. "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God, whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation"—literally, those who had gone before them, as leaders, teachers, or guides, and who had probably left the ministry of the church at Jerusalem, for the enjoyment of the rest of heaven. Theodoret, in a critical note upon the passage observes, that St. Paul "intends the saints who were dead, Stephen the proto-martyr, James the brother of John, and James called the Just, with many others who were taken off by the Jewish rage. Consider these and attentively observing their example, imitate their faith." The expression, "the end of their conversation," is explained by De Dieu to mean, "the drift and scope of it, which is Christ, his honour and glory-or the issue of it in a happy death;" and the Ethiopic version renders it, "considering their last manner of living, and their exit out of the world."

But the Apostle, as his manner was, turns at once from these inferior examples, and directs the attention of the church to the great Master himself. He would have the disciples as nothing, that the Saviour might be all in all. Here, as in the following chapter, he permits a momentary glance at the elders of the ancient church, but would have our

[·] Hebrews vii. 26.

supreme regard concentrated upon the Author and Finisher of our faith, "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and for ever."

We propose to follow this example to-night, and the text has been chosen from its evident adaptation to the occasion of this service. In closing the religious engagements of twenty-eight years in this place, it is my desire that as my ministry began with Christ, so it should end with him. have never yet made personal views and considerations the matter of discourse from this pulpit, and it is too late, or too early, to begin now. By a singular coincidence, this was one of the first texts to which your attention was called, when I preached among you before my ordination, a circumstance which I did not recollect when I fixed on the text for the present solemnity. Our subject is, THE UNCHANGEABLE-NESS OF CHRIST, considered as the ground of hope and comfort to the Church, under every Economy of Religion. And in order to contemplate with advantage the different aspects of this truth, we propose to consider the immutability of Christ, in relation to

- I. THE ESSENTIAL DIGNITY OF HIS NATURE:
- II. THE RELATIONS AND OFFICES WHICH HE SUSTAINS IN THE ECONOMY OF REDEMPTION:
- III. THE ENDURING NATURE OF THE TRUTHS OF HIS WORD, AND THE PIXED PRINCIPLES OF HIS MORAL ADMINISTRATION.
- IV. THE EXERCISE OF HIS COMPASSION AND LOVE TO THE SUBJECTS OF HIS SPIRITUAL KINGDOM.

Consider the unchangeableness of Christ,

I. In relation to the Essential Dignity of his Nature.

We must all have felt how delightful it is, in the midst of a world of change, to turn from the feebleness and instability of the creature to the fulness and all-sufficiency of the Creator. From the beginning there has been one Being, into whose character no element of change can enter; whose purposes, formed and executed with infinite prescience and power, no sublety can baffle, and no opposition withstand. This mighty being, the Lord of worlds, the author of mind, the awful yet lovely prototype of all truth and good, who was before all creation, and shall continue when worlds shall cease to be, we denominate, by an easy but comprehensive periphrasis, Gop, "the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise."

Whatever be the intellectual difficulty of framing to ourselves the full conception of such a being, every sound reasoner must be aware that the difficulty would be immeasurably greater on the negative supposition, since the bare imagination that God was not, would involve a chaos of absurdities. With the visible creation before us, we should have to suppose a succession of beings without an author, and an infinite series of effects without a cause. We should have to imagine the strange contrariety of marks of design without a designer, evidences of action without an agent, and mental operations, most wonderful and complicated, without an originating mind. Man would be without a father, the universe without a centre, and the entire moral creation without a government or a law. Who does not perceive the absurdity of these suppositions? So overwhelming is the evidence upon this great topic, that the highest authority has pronounced that man "a fool," who only "says in his heart there is no God." And the inspired apostle represents the visible frame of things as so demonstrative of the being and perfection of the Deity, as to leave a man intellectually without excuse, who does not argue from them his ETERNAL POWER AND GOD-HEAD.*

But, "behold, I shew you a mystery." This attribute of Immutability is here and elsewhere ascribed to Christ, and stands associated with the entire scripture testimony, which declares his true and proper divinity. This constitutes an important part of the great mystery of godliness, wherein, for

mediatorial ends, the human nature is described as having been brought into immediate union with the divine; so that the wonderful person thus constituted, being an equal sharer in the properties and attributes of both natures, is indeed "Immanuel, God with us,"-" of the seed of David, after the flesh," but, in his essential nature, "over all God blessed for Apart from this doctrine, which we receive upon the evidence that sustains the volume of inspiration, we should consider the Bible as one perplexed enigma, incapable of solution upon any known principles of criticism or interpretation; but this being understood and admitted, the record becomes Apart from it, I could attach perfectly consistent with itself. no consistent meaning to the language of the text, which implies the possession of changeless and unlimited perfection. To see the full import of the language employed, as bearing upon the doctrine of the divine nature of our blessed Lord. it will be needful to examine the force of the terms, and to view them in connexion with some other scriptures confirmatory of the same truth.

1. Consider the force of the terms employed, and especially as they would be understood by Jewish readers. "The same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." These words are to be considered in connexion with the scope and object of the entire epistle, in which the writer is to be regarded as a Jew writing to Jews. He does not, as in other epistles, mention his own name, nor does he put any thing upon his apostolical authority, but appeals to principles clearly recognized by his Hebrew brethren, and quotes texts and prophecies from the old Testament, which were undeniably understood by them as relating to their own Messiah, and these he shows to have been fulfilled in Jesus Christ.*

The expression, "yesterday," as employed by the Hebrews, is used to denote indefinite past time, and when it is thus placed in conjunction with the other words of the text,

[.] See Dr. Mc. Knight's Preface to Hebrews.

"to-day, and for ever," the whole idea conveyed to the mind is that of perfection and perpetuity. The entire expression is a well-known Hebraism, denoting the past, the present, and the future, to which, in this case, no limits are fixed, and it may be regarded as equivalent to the significant words, "who was, and is, and is to come." Every one conversant with the Jewish writings and antiquities, would be prepared to understand these terms in their largest latitude of mean-"Jesus Christ, the same yesterday," comprehending the whole eternity past, when "his goings forth were of old from everlasting;" to-day, embracing the whole space of time present, in which he has been described as "rejoicing in the habitable parts of his earth," and having his "delights among the sons of men:" for ever, through the untold cycles of ages yet to come. Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, before the world was created; to-day, while the world continues in being: for ever, when this world shall be no more. Yesterday, under the ancient Jewish economy: to-day, during the gospel dispensation on earth: for ever, in the unbroken successions and continuity of the heavenly This representation therefore of Christ, as "the same," throughout all past, present, and future duration, without any restriction, involves that Immutability which is an attribute of God himself.

• "Through all times and ages," for as Philo observes, τριμερής γάρ ὁ χρόνος έκ παρελολυθότος και ένεστώτος, και μάλλοντος. Time consists of three parts, past, present, and to come, and these three signify, ἄπαντα τὸν αιῶνα, all time, or the whole compass of it: so that as the same doctrine of Christianity, must always be professed by all Christians, so the same Jesus is always ready to assist and reward the sincere professors of it.—Whitby in loc.

Professor Stuart supports this view of the text. " \acute{o} avro's corresponds with \emph{ev} \acute{o} avros \emph{ei} , Ps cil. 28, [Septuagint ci. 27] which there designates immutability or examily; for the parallel distich is, "Thy years shall not come to an end." To refer the expression to Christian doctrine, and unite this verse with the one which follows, seems to me plainly a desertion of the obvious intentions of the writer. Dr. Schulz construes the passage as I have done; $\chi\theta \emph{eg}$ kai $\sigma \acute{\eta}\mu \emph{e}\rho \emph{o}\nu$ rod's alway, is a Hebraism used to express the past, the present, and the future, and \acute{o} avros joined with these, denotes immutability."—Stuart in loc.

That the Apostle intended all this, and did not limit the phrase to the Saviour's doctrine, as some would have us believe, may be inferred from his use of similar terms in the first chapter. His object throughout, is to shew the essential glory of Christ, as superior in nature and office to all creatures. Thus he directly applies to our Lord, in accordance alike with Jewish anticipation and Christian testimony, the memorable language of the forty-fifth Psalm, "And unto the Son he saith, thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever." And in continuation of the same argument, he also applies to him the sublime language of the hundred and second Psalm, "And thou Lord, in the beginning, hast laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thine hands; they shall perish, but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment, and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up and they shall be changed, but THOU ART THE SAME, and thy years shall not fail." This we deem a proof, beyond all contradiction, of what the inspired writer really intended when he said, "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day and for ever." Upon this quotation by the Apostle, from Ps. cii. Calvin justly remarks, "All the other things that are contained in this Psalm, agree aptly with the character of Christ, and this among others, that he is God eternal, Creator of Heaven and Earth, that everlastingness without change is attributed to him; whereby both his majesty is exalted to the highest pinnacle, and he himself is taken out of the order of all created things."*

2. The same truth may be confirmed by considering the analogous and coincident testimony of other scriptures. To these, however, our space allows only a brief reference. A full enumeration of the passages, even in the Old Testament, which bear upon this subject would require a volume. We

 [&]quot;Quum Jesus Christus sit idem (ὁ αὐτὸς) heri, et hodie, et in secula, consequens est ipsum esse verum Deum: quippe quum sit immutabilis et eternus: hæ enum sunt proprietates essentiales Dei."—Piscator in loc.

cannot, however, overlook the prophecy of Micah, quoted by St. Matthew. "And thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me, that shall be ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." This last expression is in exact coincidence with the doctrine deduced from our text, and appears irreconcilable with any other."*

In the visions of the Apocalypse our Lord says of himself, and we contend for the rigid Jewish acceptation of the terms. "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." And again, "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last." The conjunction of the first and last letters of the alphabet, was the well known Jewish symbol of perfection, whatever might be the subject to which it related; and the Greeks employed it in a similar sense, as inclusive of all wisdom and excellence. As these two letters are comprehensive of the rest, and thus include the sum of all that language contains, the phrase expresses the absolute perfection of Christ, "in whom dwelleth all the fulness of wisdom and knowledge." Our Lord describes himself as being the Amen, + the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the Creation of God:"-not the beginning

Dr. Pocock remarks on this passage, "Here it is observed two goings forth are mentioned, with respect to the two natures of Messiah; as a man, he goes forth from Bethlehem; as a divine being, he is from everlasting, an eternal emanation from God."

[&]quot;Hoc loco significat Michæus Messiam quod humanitatem attinet, nasciturum Bethlehems; quod ad Divinitatem autem non esse nasciturum, quippe qui sit sempiternus."—Castalio in loc.

Grotius applies the text to Zerubbabel, though he was born in Babylon, for says he, Natus ex Bethlehemo recte dicitur, quod ex Davidis familia esset que orta ex Bethlehemo." But in this way of interpreting Scripture, says Bishop Chandler, "every descendant from David might as well be predicted here, as Zerubbabel, and any thing may be said of any thing or person."

[†] This term, the AMEN, is a very expressive one in the opinion of the Jews. It has the force of the most solemn oath; and is one of the titles given to God himself. See Isaiah lxv. 16, where it is said, "that he who blesseth himself

in the sense of his being the first creature, but in the sense of his being the Author of Creation. He is the first, before all beginning; he is the last, continuing without end; thus claiming that uniform and unalterable existence, which agrees only with a being whose nature is self derived and independent.

In perfect accordance with these representations, we find that the same forms of expression used to describe the claims and perfections of Jehovah in the Old Testament, are applied without restriction to Christ in the New. If Moses says, "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth;" John says, "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God; all things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made." If it be said in the Psalms, "Worship him, all ye gods;" we read in the Hebrews, "And when he bringeth in his only begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the Angels of God worship him." If in Jeremiah, God is represented as saying, "I the Lord, search the heart, I try the reins to give every man according to his own ways;" in the Apocalypse, Jesus says, "And all the Churches shall know that I am He that searcheth the reins and hearts, and I will give unto every one of you according to your works." If Isaiah says, "I saw the Lord high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple, and the posts of the door moved at the voice

in the earth shall bless himself in the God of truth, and he that sweareth in the earth shall swear by the God of truth." The words may be rendered, shall bless himself in God Amen, that is, in God who is the Amen. Dr. Gill, whose opinion is entitled to some weight, from his knowledge of Jewish antiquities, observes, "the word Amen is the name of a divine person with the Jews and it seems, the second person; for so on those words in Prov. 8, 30, 'Then I was by him, as one brought up with him,' they observe do not read Amon, the word there used, but Amen; and a little after they say is the notaricon, or sign of the Hebrew words for "God the faithful King." They make Amen to be one of the names of the second Sephira, by whom the second person in the Godhead seems to be designed, and they say that the word Amen, by Gematry, (or numerically,) answers to the two names, Jehovah and Adonai.—Gill on Rev. iii. 14.

of him that cried;" a New Testament Commentator tells us that this glory was the glory of Christ. "These things" said Esaias, "when he saw his glory, and spake of Him."* If it be said by Malachi, "I the Lord change not, therefore, ye sons of Jacob are not consumed;" it is also said by St. Paul, "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever."

We proceed to show that Christ is unchangeable,

II. In the relations and offices which he sustains in the Economy of Redemption.

The Epistle to the Hebrews not only attests, as we have seen, the doctrine of the divinity of Christ, but furnishes a key to all preceding dispensations of religion. It presents Christ as the centre of divine designs, and exhibits the great and paramount fact that he has always been the medium of communication between earth and heaven. From the moment of the apostacy, an institute of mercy was provided, by a wisdom that was infinite, and a great Deliverer promised by whom that plan should, in the progress of ages, be carried into its full effect. The history of the Church, from the transactions of Eden to the close of time, is nothing more nor less than the development of this purpose; all Providence being "in the hand of a Mediator." Christ has been, therefore, from the first dawn of hope to man, "the way, and the truth, and the life;" and equally so under all dispensations.

This one idea of Mediation, gives the true explanation of the ancient economies, and of the successive manifestations of God to man. Christ was the Prophet, whom Moses announced; the Priest, after the order of Melchizedec, whom

[&]quot;If any words are clear and definite, those here used are so to express that the object presented in vision to the prophet, whether seen or foreseen, was the glory of the Lord Jehovah, the Being whom the hosts of heaven adore. It would be useless to reason with any one who could read the passage and deny this. We find then, that the Apostle John did not hesitate to make a direct application to the person of his Lord and master of the loftiest style of Deity that the Old Testament could furnish."—Scripture Testimony, Dr. Pye Smith. Vol. 1, p. 265. ed. 1818.

David foresaw—the King, whose triumphs Daniel and Isaiah He was the Shiloh, for whose salvation Jacob waited; the Kinsman-Redeemer, whose coming Job anticipated; the illustrious Seed, whose day Abraham desired to see; and in whom our first parents rejoiced, as he who should bruise the Serpent's head. This was the promise "to which the twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hoped to come," whether they wandered amidst the awful solitudes of the wilderness, or exulted in the peaceful worship of the temple. Typical sacrifices indicated the one great sacrifice; typical saviours revealed him who was "mighty to save;" typical prophets foreshadowed his prophetical office; typical priests illustrated his eternal priesthood; typical kings prefigured his supreme dominion, whom God hath set upon his holv hill of Zion. The testimony of Jesus was the very spirit of prophecy. "The light was the life of men." It was his to produce both the dream and the interpretation; to reveal the want and to supply the remedy; to present himself alike as the Teacher and the Oracle, the Victim and the Priest, the Shepherd and the King, all our salvation and all our desire.

The successive manifestations of the divine will, from the earliest times, were a part of the same system. Our race has never been without some knowledge of a Saviour, the teacher, the guide, and the one hope of man; not only the object revealed, but the Being in connexion with whom the revelation itself was made. Many are of the opinion that some of the more signal of the angelic appearances recorded in scripture were made in the person of Christ himself, who is emphatically styled "the Messenger of the Covenant," or, as the Septuagint renders it, "the Angel of the great Council." There is much to favour this idea, in the peculiar language employed by these celestial visitants, in the nature of the blessings they bestowed, and in the homage, and even worship, they accepted. But on either supposition, whether these communications were made by the promised Messiah before his incarnation, or by "ministering spirits, sent forth" then as now, "to minister unto the heirs of salvation," it is certain that they were parts of the great mediatorial system, having reference to the work and office of Christ, and tending to keep alive in the minds of the faithful, the expectation of his coming.

Dr. Owen strongly advocates the view, that these appearances were " revelations of the Promised Seed, the great and only Saviour and deliverer of his Church, in his eternal preexistence, and pledges of his future incarnation."* Dr. Samuel Clarke speaks of this, as the constant doctrine of the primitive writers of the Church, + and says, " It is the unanimous opinion of all antiquity, that the Angel who said I am the God of thy fathers, (Acts vii. 30, 32) was Christ the Angel of the Covenant, the Angel of God's presence, in whom the name of God was, speaking in the name of the Invisible Father." This opinion was not unknown to the early Jewish writers, who are often worthy of attention in the interpretation they furnish of their own scriptures. Various intimations occur, in their most approved paraphrases and Targums, that the Angel who appeared to their fathers was no created angel, but a being possessed of divine qualities and perfections. One of their Rabbis, t commenting on Joshua v. 14, says, "This Angel, if we speak exactly, is the Angel Redeemer, of whom it is written, my name is in him, that very Angel who said to Jacob, 'I am the God of Bethel;' he of whom it is said, God called to Moses out of the Burning Bush."

Preliminary Exercitations on the Hebrews. † Scripture Doctrine, p. 93 R. Moses Gerundensis Nechmanni, quoted with approbation by Dr. Owen.

[§] The following citations from Scheetgenius, indicate the prevailing opinion. "This Angel denotes some mystery. He is the Angel of whom it is written, 'The Angel who hath redeemed me.' Genesis alviii. 16. And behold, so taught the Rabbis. It is decreed that in the future period (the age of the Messiah) he shall become supreme and precious: so that by him the holy name shall be exalted, and the Holy and Blessed will by him redeem the idolatrous nations." The book Zohar on Deut. ap Schætgen. Hor. Hebr. et Talm. tom ii. 125.

[&]quot;That Augel is the Redeemer, who is found in every redemption that is in the world: the Shechina who always walks with man, and never departs from

There is much of interest and attractiveness in the thought that our world has been, so early and so long, the object of divine solicitude. It is affecting to think that He, who afterwards "was made flesh, and dwelt among us," had come before upon many an embassy of mercy, and descended to announce to our first parents the promise of Redemption:—that He, who conversed with the woman of Samaria at Jacob's well, was found of Hagar when she sought him not, "by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by a fountain in the way to Shur:"-that He, "the Captain of our Salvation," who has since been made perfect through sufferings, appeared to Joshua and Gideon, as "Captain of the Lord's host:"that He who has saved his people from many a fiery trial since, conversed with the three children in the furnace on the plain of Dura, when "the form of the fourth was like unto the Son of God." Nor can we forget that when Ezekiel beheld the symbolic vision at Chebar, and the rainbow-brightness encircled the divine pavilion, he is careful to state that "upon the likeness of the throne, was the likeness of the appearance of a man above upon it," and adds, "this was the appearance of the likeness of the Glory of the Lord. And when I saw it, I fell upon my face, and I heard a voice of one that spake." It is remarkable that these images and symbols meet us again in the book of Revelation, in direct reference to Christ. "And immediately I was in the Spirit; and, behold a throne was set in heaven, and one sat upon the throne. And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone; and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald. *

him. Ibid. p. 145. The Redeemer of the world, the guardian of men. He it is who hath prepared blessings for the whole world. Ibid. p. 149. "This Son is the faithful shepherd. Of thee it is said, Kiss the Son; Thou art my Son. He is the Prince of the Israelites, the Lord over all things below, the Lord of ministering angels, the Son of the Supreme, the Son of the Holy and Blessed God, and the gracious Shechina." Id. ap. eund. p. 6.

[•] Rev. iv. 2, 3. Ezek. i. 26. 28.

The relations and offices which the Saviour sustains to his Church, are not temporary, but abiding. What he was in times past, he remains still, and shall for ever remain, our teaching Prophet, our atoning Priest, and our exalted King. On earth he fulfilled the office of a prophet, in the toils of his public ministry, and in the instructions he afforded to his apostles. In his death he fulfilled his priestly office, when he "made his soul an offering for sin." In his rising and ascension, he entered upon the exercise of his kingly office; dominions, principalities, and powers being made sub-Nor do these offices terminate with his earthly existence, but must continue till the final consummation of the mediatorial system. That he does not cease from the office of a prophet, is evident from the disclosures of the book of Revelation, "which he sent and signified by his Angel to his servant John;" and from the enduring gift of his Spirit, to lead us into all truth. That his priestly office continues, the Apostle has placed beyond dispute. "For this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God: even Jesus, made an High Priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedec." "Wherefore he is able to save unto the uttermost, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." That his kingly office remains, is equally unquestionable. "For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet." "To the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, on the throne of David, to order it and establish it for ever."

The unchangeableness of Christ is seen,

III. IN THE ENDURING NATURE OF THE TRUTHS OF HIS WORD, AND THE FIXED PRINCIPLES OF HIS MORAL GOVERNMENT AND ADMINISTRATION.

We have amply stated our reasons for applying this text to the person and offices of Christ, in opposition to those who would restrict it to the doctrine which he taught; but we equally believe, and contend for, its concurrent application to the entire system of truth of which he is the author. The Apostle cites the immutability of Christ, the founder of the system, as a reason for strenuous adherence to the Christian faith. "Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines, for it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace."

Immutability is an attribute of the truth itself, as well as the attribute of the God of truth. The Religion of Jesus partakes of the unchanging character of its eternal author. Unlike the schemes and systems of human invention, or the arts and sciences which own an earthly origin, and are perfected in the lapse of ages, by the successive observations and experiments of different minds, the essential principles of the divine word were perfect from the first, and shall so remain unimproved, because unimprovable, to the very end. They are like constant quantities in science, susceptible of no fluctuation, and from which we are entitled to reason, as from admitted truths. The dispensations of religion vary, but the religion itself is one. From the very first there has been one way of salvation only, by faith in a promised Messiah, and by the experience of enlightening and transforming grace. From the very first, also, there has been but one code of laws, the transcript of the divine perfections, serving equally for all time, looking back to Eden's bloom and brightness, and forward to the close of the world's history. Even to eternity the first and great command will be as binding and as immutable as it is now, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbour as thyself." The duties which we owe to each other, not varying with degrees of latitude and longitude, must be equally fixed and determinate, whatever be the economy under which we live. Christ came not to destroy, but to fulfil; not to relax any existing obligations but to confirm them; upholding and vindicating the principles of the divine government, whilst he brings back the subjects of his mercy to the lost favour and image of God.

The stability of the system of grace, is analogous to that

of nature. "There is one Lord, and his name One." We all know, that if the government of the visible world were not carried on by fixed and general laws, a character of distressing uncertainty would pervade human life. There would be no such thing as experience, or science; no directing wisdom derivable from the past, no provident anticipation for the future. The husbandman would not till the soil, nor the mariner spread his canvass to the gale, nor the parent educate his child, if there were no ascertained connection between known causes and corresponding results. But far more injurious would be any uncertainty in the principles of our If the scheme of salvation were variable, our expectations would be disappointed, and our faith vain. The atonement of yesterday might be unavailing to-day; the method of acceptance would have to be continually fixed afresh; and the treasured experience of the Church in past ages would be useless to us now. But as it is, we build on rock; and find in the unchanging character of the Redeemer, an argument for the perpetual stability of our hope. "Wherefore also it is contained in scripture, Behold I lay in Sion, for a foundation, a chief corner stone, elect, precious, and he that believeth in him shall not be confounded."*

Throughout the whole Bible, we find that the immutability ascribed to Christ is constantly represented as also characterizing every doctrine of our faith. How is the Gospel itself described, by the angel flying in the midst of heaven? It is "the everlasting Gospel," permanent as a dispensation of grace, authoritative as a rule of life. Is it a Covenant? It is "an everlasting covenant ordered in all things, and sure." Are we partakers of its benefits? Christ is "the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." Are we justified, and made accepted with God? It is because Christ has "brought in an everlasting righteousness." Are we renewed? We are "born again not with corruptible seed, but

with incorruptible, by the word of truth which liveth and abideth for ever." Are we the objects of God's redeeming mercy? "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me saying, yea I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." Are the disciples supported under every trial? it is "by two immutable things in which it was impossible for God to lie, that the heirs of promise have strong consolation." Are the ungodly and impenitent condemned at last? They are "punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power." Are Christians conducted to happiness and heaven? They "lay hold on eternal life," they receive "a kingdom that cannot be moved," they inherit "a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." And if we are asked on what basis this mighty superstructure of hope and enjoyment rests, reaching from earth to heaven. and extending from time to eternity, we answer in the emphatic words, "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever."

Hence we are not of the number of those who are continually looking out for novelty in religion, or who indulge in dreams of future developement, such as have recently been put forth. While we would neither limit the Holy One of Israel, nor question the activity or progression of the human mind, in any department of thought, yet we feel that there is always a presumption against novelty, so far as the essential doctrines of the gospel are concerned. It is not to be lightly supposed that a divine revelation, coeval with man. has not expressed itself clearly and definitely upon these points until now; and in reference to great principles, we generally find that what is true is not new, and what is new is not true. The Apostle strongly cautions us, as we have seen, against being "carried about with divers and strange doctrines." We do not look for new elements in nature, for new colours in the rainbow, for new principles of matter, or new laws of motion; but the sublime yet simple laws of attraction and

gravitation are found to preserve the universe in order and harmony from age to age. A similar uniformity is found to obtain in the kindred department of mind, and in the entire system of Christianity. Yet, without expecting novelty in essential truths, there is ample scope for active inquiry. We may reasonably hope, from the devout study of the word, and the works, and the providence of God, to obtain a deeper insight into his mind and will, and to detect stores of hidden wisdom, which had hitherto eluded our indolent search. The subject is infinite, and the treasure inexhaustible. Our knowledge ought to be progressive, as we advance towards the region of pure light, till we are "able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and heighth, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge."

The disciples of Christ may fitly contrast the stability of their faith with the utter fallacy of every ground of dependence besides. Other names lose their attraction, other systems of religion fail to perpetuate their influence, or to maintain a hold upon the public mind, from their proved insufficiency. They were, and are not. We speak of them as of oracles that have been silenced, or of meteors that have ceased to shine. In worldly affairs, the idol of to-day may be the victim of to-morrow. The lustre of new discoveries. or of new exploits, may subject the most distinguished names to a lasting eclipse, or at best they must yield to the approaching darkness of that long night, in which the fashion of this world shall have passed away. But of Jesus it is written, "His name shall endure for ever." It has attached the patriarch in his tent, the Arab in the desert, the prophet in his cave, the martyr at the stake, the saint in his closet, and the rapt scraph that glows with devotion before the eternal throne. The glory of Jesus has reached a meridian whence it can never decline. The sun of righteousness never sets, the star of Bethlehem never wanders, the rose of Sharon never withers, the fountain of life and salvation never fails.

Like some precious pearl which, the more it is examined the more it is prized, the religion of Christ will bear to be tried in all lights, and like its author, must remain, "yesterday, to-day, and for ever, the same."

Christ is unchangeable.

IV. IN THE EXERCISE OF HIS COMPASSION AND LOVE TO THE SUBJECTS OF HIS SPIRITUAL KINGDOM.

We see in the life of Christ the mediatorial system brought into action; and the constancy of his regard to his own disciples on earth is a practical illustration of his enduring attachment to his people in all time. "Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them to the end." the consideration of the unalterable perfection of Him with whom we have to do, and of the never-failing constancy of his grace, that gives so deep an interest to every memorial of his history. Why does the Church from age to age, hang with such intense delight over the pages which record the mournful, yet triumphant career of the man of sorrows? Why do we love to read over the long catalogue of his miracles of mercy, and all the acts of his tenderness and perseverance towards his wayward and infirm disciples? do we mark, with such awakened emotion, his temptation in the wilderness, his agony in the garden, his sufferings on the cross, and his ascension to the throne? Why? but because of the illustration thus afforded of the perfections of him who still stands in the nearest alliance to ourselves, and upon whose favour and friendship our immortal well-being is suspended. We study all these, not as so many facts in a history, but as so many developements of a character, and as presenting the spiritual portraiture of One, who has bound up our interests with his own, and identified our happiness with his glory.

For the same reason it is, that we follow the Saviour in thought from earth to heaven, and behold him seated upon the throne, but yet unchanged; still owning the symbol of the Lamb that was slain; still, as ever, touched with the feel-

ing of our infirmities, and bearing the names of all the tribes on his breastplate and near his heart. His removal from this low world to a higher region, has only extended the sphere of his gracious agency, without impairing his disposition to bless. This is our encouragement to approach him in prayer, under all the trials and vicissitudes of life. He who is bowed down under the pressure of worldly care, or burdened with the consciousness of guilt, may well rejoice in the consideration that the sceptre of universal authority is placed in the hands of infinite benignity and love. They who are wounded and dejected in spirit, under the failure of earthly sympathy, will do well to remember, that He changes not though all men change, that He forgets not though all men forget, that He forsakes not though all men forsake. " The mountains may depart and the hills be removed," and all the boasted securities of life may be broken up; but "my loving-kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed," saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee."

There are moments in our earthly experience, in which, with almost pardonable infirmity, we seem to think that if our Lord were still on earth we could approach him, with a degree of faith and fervour to which we are strangers now, and order our cause before him, and fill our mouth with argu-But we forget that he is susceptible of no variation from whathe was; not even the shadow of a turning. For he has always an ear to listen when sinners have a heart to pray; and the same causes which keep us from his throne now, would certainly have kept us back from his presence then. We seem to envy that poor woman who had but to touch the hem of his garment to be made whole; but we forget that the simplest application of the mind to Christ, will suffice to put us into possession of the blessings of salvation. A look will do it, the look of faith, of penitence, of prayer: Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else." We seem to covet the precious privilege of Peter and James and John, who beheld his Transfiguration on the Mount; but we forget that an equal elevation of feeling and of thought may be ours, when we enter our closet and shut our door, and pray to our Father who seeth in secret. We think of the dying thief who expired with the Saviour of the world at his side, and whose latest sufferings were cheered by his availing sympathy; but we forget that he is equally able to remember us, now that he is come into his kingdom, and that faith in his name has power to "turn the shadow of death into morning."

Every perfection which the Redeemer possessed in the eternity past, and manifested during his abode on earth, he possesses now, and must possess for ever. His immutability is not so much a separate attribute in itself, as it is the quality of all his attributes, the mode in which they subsist. Change implies defect. To decay, or to advance, to improve or to decline, belongs only to created natures. changes, must either proceed from better to worse, or from an inferior to a higher condition of good; and the alteration must arise either from internal tendency, or from foreign influence. But nothing like this can be predicated of Him with whom we have to do. Change cannot originate from himself, as he possesses infinite excellence; neither can he yield to external force, for he is the blessed and only potentate. What He was he is; what He is he shall for ever remain, without variation or decay. He is the same in power as when he spread the canopy of the heavens, and scattered the stars as dust, and laid deep and firm the broad foundations of the earth, and poured forth, as from unfathomable urns, the waters of the mighty deep. He is the same in wisdom, as when he kindled the lights of intelligence in seraphs and in men, the brightest reflections of the eternal mind. He is the same in goodness, as when he formed man in Paradise, and fitted Paradise for man: and in purity, as when he framed those immutable laws, on which the well-being of the universe must rest, connecting happiness with holiness, and misery with sin. He is the same in mercy, as when he framed the

Covenant of Redemption, and became the surety of guilty man, and adjusted the economy of providence to meet the successive exigencies of innumerable minds, blending the vast and the minute in one harmonious whole. Yes, and he is the same too, in his compassion,—the same, as when he was worshipped in the manger, as when he healed the sick, and gave sight to the blind, and raised the dead; the same as when he walked on the waters to calm the fears of his trembling disciples, and looked Peter into repentance, and conversed with his dejected followers on the way to Emmaus, and said to Thomas, "Reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side, and be not faithless but believing."

And when we meet him amidst all the vast solemnities of the future world, he will be still the same. When the Son of Man comes back from the far country, to summon nations to his bar, and open the gates of immortality to his redeemed, he shall come back unchanged. "Ye men of Galilee," said the angel, "why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This SAME JESUS which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner, as ye have seen him go into heaven." I shall see, may the Christian say, change everywhere else, but no change in him. I shall see a dissolution of all earthly ties, but no dissolution of the union between my soul and I shall see a divorce between princes and their prerogatives, between nature and her elements, between matter and its laws, but no divorce between my soul and Christ. shall see an end of faith, nothing to be believed that I do not know; an end of hope, nothing to be desired that I do not enjoy; but no end of that love which Christ bears to me, no end of that felicity which he has provided and reserved for his people in the unseen world. "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever."

We have thus set before you a few thoughts upon the particulars announced. We have endeavoured to exhibit the unchangeableness of Christ in the essential qualities of of his nature, in the relations and offices he sustains, in the

fixed principles of his truth and government, and in the love which he bears to his people.

As in all my ministrations I have desired to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ, and him crucified; so in this parting hour, I am anxious again to set him forth in all the fulness of his grace and the sufficiency of his atoning sacrifice. Only remember, that this view of the Saviour's character has an awful aspect to the wicked, while it has an attractive one to the righteous. A just, as well as a gracious uniformity, pervades the dispensations of heaven. Jesus is no less faithful in the execution of his threatenings, than in the performance of his promises. He is the same as when "he spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, in chains under darkness, waiting the judgment of the great day:" the same as when he expelled Adam from Paradise, and placed the Cherubim around the tree of life: the same as when he opened the flood gates of his wrath upon the world of the ungodly: the same as when he suffered Judas to go to his own place, and smote Ananias and Sapphira with a common judgment. We solemnly warn you, that the injured honour of insulted truth and justice, must demand a high and awful vindication upon those who reject the invitations of a Saviour's love. The sceptre of abused mercy will one day be exchanged for a rod of righteous retribution. The same scriptures which speak of everlasting salvation, speak also of "everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." There is in the rejection of the proffered remedy, such an evidence of a fixed and absolute choice of evil, as leaves nothing before the human spirit but hopeless and irretrievable ruin; nothing but "a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries."

It is this which gives such an intensity of interest to the ministry of the gospel, since we cannot hide from our view the tremendous alternative, which alike awaits ourselves and our hearers. The gospel cannot possess a neutral character, but must prove "a savour of life unto life, or a savour of death unto death." "Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men:" and nothing has so much tended to bear up my own mind in the prospect of such a service as this, as the hope that a last appeal may be blessed and owned of God, to produce impressions that shall never be erased; to lead some to seek Christ, who have never sought him before, and to endear his name in a higher degree than ever, to those who have experienced the power of his grace. I do hope that among this large congregation, collected together not from curiosity, nor merely from personal kindness and respect, there are many that have come from the highest motives, and with the conviction that this hour would be kept sacred for purposes of religious impression and edification. Think of your encouragement to seek Christ; encouragement derived from his name and his nature. name is called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins; and he possesses ever the nature of his name. His compassion disposes him, his power enables him, and his promise binds him, to save to the uttermost those that come to God by him. "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ. as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead," as though for the last time, "be ye reconciled to God."

And, this is the Saviour, men and brethren, whom it has been my honour and happiness, for twenty-eight years, to commend to you. No other doctrine than that now proclaimed in your hearing, has been heard within these walls during this long period. Among other things for which I desire to give thanks to God, is that we have been preserved, as a religious community, from those errors and heresies, which have extensively prevailed elsewhere. During those years, many forms of dangerous speculation have sprung up. There were the errors of the late Mr. Irving, on the sinful humanity of our Lord, his extreme views on prophetical interpretation, and his strange opinions upon modern miracles, and the gift of

tongues, which at one time produced considerable mischief in many circles. Shortly after, arose what is called the Tractarian heresy, which opposed some of the leading principles and doctrines of the reformation, and tended, as we think, to subvert the basis of our common Protestantism. This has been naturally followed by open secessions to Rome, from professedly Protestant communions. Nor can we forget that, of late years, Popery itself has renewed its pretensions and begun again to prevail in many parts of the country, so much so as to awaken some apprehension, as to the immediate issue. in many reflecting minds. From all these, not to mention less conspicuous errors, we have been mercifully preserved; and we trust that the constant and faithful promulgation of the great doctrines of the Christian faith, particularly those which refer to the work and offices of Christ, will ever be found an effectual bulwark against error and heresy, in every part of the Christian church.

What shall I say respecting the occasion which has more immediately convened us together to night? Two things impress my mind in parting. I speak as a man. The one is, the memory of the dead; the other is, the kindness of the living. I think of the ministers of the gospel in this town and county, who have departed in the faith since I came among you, and with whom I have been associated in many a work of mercy. Since I entered the county, every pulpit but one has been vacated, and Mr. Holmes of Wisbech and myself, are the only pastors in our denomination, who retain at the present moment the position we then occupied. Several of the pulpits have been more than once vacated, either by death or removal; and in some, I have taken part in more than one ordination service. In this town, the Rev. Professor. Scholefield and Mr. Edmonds, are the only ministers who were here when I came: and of those who took part in my ordination service, all but two are gone to their rest. I think also of the revered names of Farish, and Simeon, and Lane. and Webster, and Langshaw, and other excellent clergymen, in

whose society it was my privilege to spend many happy and profitable hours, either in private, or in connection with public institutions. With every minister of the Gospel, Baptist, Wesleyan, and Independent, I have been on friendly terms, having had no controversy with any. And it is but just to say, in honor of the dead, and of the living, that the attention and kindness I have received from members of the Church, and of the University, have equalled those of our own circles, without any approach to compromise on the one side, or any want of candour or confidence on the other. To Mr. Edmonds, Mr. Gray, Mr. Roff, and their friends, I am bound to make similar acknowledgments. Some of them I have long and intimately known; for I preached in two separate years at the Baptist Chapel when I was a student at Homerton, and it was then that I formed acquaintances and friendships, which have continued unbroken for thirty five years.

I also think, at this moment, of the deaths that have occurred in this congregation; very few of those who originally welcomed me here, being now alive. The removal of friends, as many present know, has been a painful part of my history, though it has often been cheered, and cheered too I may confidently say, in a great majority of instances, by the assurance that the ministry of the Gospel in this place had not been in vain. "Write, blessed are the dead that die in the Lord; yea saith the Spirit, for they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them."

Nor am I less impressed with the kindness of the living; and the grateful task remains to me of presenting my earnest thanks to my esteemed friends, both in my own congregation, and in the town, for the regard and consideration I have received from them through a long course of time, and which has not ceased even yet. For the strong expressions of esteem and attachment which have poured in upon me during the last week, and to a late hour last night, taking the shape, in many instances, of generous contributions, which I neither asked nor expected, I feel more obliged than I can

possibly describe. But on these points, as on some others, I will not trust myself to enlarge. I will only say, that as my first wish while among you has been to promote your spiritual prosperity, so my greatest delight, when I am away, will be to hear of your religious welfare. I trust that a divine blessing will attend the labours of any minister whom the providence of God may appoint over you; and I desire humbly to look forward to the period in which they who sow and they who reap, may rejoice together. If I were ever in danger of forgetting Cambridge, which I can never be, there is one memorial which would always recal my thoughts,—the ashes of my beloved brother are among you; "the bones of Joseph are in your camp." You have given him a grave.

"AND NOW, BRETHREN, I COMMEND YOU TO GOD, AND TO THE WORD OF HIS GRACE, WHICH IS ABLE TO BUILD YOU UP, AND TO GIVE YOU AN INHERITANCE AMONG ALL THEM THAT ARE SANCTIFIED." AMEN.

DISCOURSES

DELIVERED AT THE

RECOGNITION OF THE REV. GEORGE THOMSON,

CO-PASTOR

WITH

THE REV. H. F. BURDER, D.D.

OF THE

CHURCH ASSEMBLING IN ST. THOMAS'S SQUARE, HACKNEY,

On THURSDAY, MARCH 2, 1848.

LONDON:

JACKSON AND WALFORD,
18, ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD.
AND SOLD BY BUSH, HACKNEY.
1848.

LONDON: R. GLAY, PRINTER, BREAD STREET HILL.

Brder of the Berbice.

THE Rev. Dr. F. A. Cox offered Prayer.

The Rev. John Hunt, Pastor of the Church at Brixton, read a portion of the Sacred Scriptures, and proposed the questions.

JOHN DENNIS, Esq. replied to the first of the questions, and the Rev. GEORGE THOMSON to the second.

The Rev. Dr. Burder implored the blessing of God on the ministry of his Colleague, now recognised as Co-Pastor.

The Rev. Algernon Wells, Pastor of the Church at Clapton, delivered an Address to the Rev. George Thomson.

The Rev. John Kennedy, M.A., Pastor of the Church at Stepney, delivered a discourse to the Church.

The Rev. Dr. J. PYE SMITH concluded with prayer.

DISCOURSES.

&c.

THE Rev. JOHN HUNT prefaced the questions he was about to propose with the following remarks:—

In the numerous and varied engagements which occupy the attention of a Christian Church, none are more deeply interesting or more important than the settlement of the Pastor who, alone, or in conjunction with another, is to conduct the solemnities of its worship, to administer its ordinances, and to expound and illustrate the great doctrines and precepts of the inspired volume. On the right discharge of these duties will depend, under God, the stability, the happiness, and the extension of the These are the interests which stand connected with the engagements of this evening, and they are such as eternity alone can fully develope; involving, as they do, the glory of God, the honour of Christ, and the salvation of immortal souls. Nothing on earth can surpass in importance the appointment and provision of a faithful, laborious, persevering, and efficient Ministry. Such a Ministry, next to the presence of Christ, and the gift of the Holy Spirit, is the greatest blessing which the Church on earth can enjoy.

Promises of such a Ministry, and of grace to those

who sustain it, are graciously and abundantly given us in the sacred Scriptures; and amidst the difficulties of the Ministry, they are like the fruits of Paradise in the wilderness, refreshing the heart, and cheering on the spirit to persevering and more vigorous effort.

"I will give you pastors," said the Lord, by the prophet Jeremiah, "according to mine heart, who shall feed you with knowledge and understanding." And the Church, exulting in such a promise, breaks forth into singing: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!"

We assemble this evening to participate in the holy pleasure which such promises, in their accomplishment, are calculated to produce.

What are the permanent offices in the Church, according to the law of Christ, we learn from the beginning of the Epistle to the Philippians: "Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons." The qualifications essential to these offices are fully given in Paul's instructions to Timothy.

It is evident that, in the Church at Philippi, as also at Ephesus, there was a plurality of Bishops or Pastors. Among ourselves, also, we cannot doubt, there are Churches in which more than one Pastor must be exceedingly desirable, if not even necessary to full prosperity. That Church, therefore, acts wisely which willingly yields to that desirableness or that necessity. In a numerous Church, spread over a wide district as to residence, two Pastors, labouring in harmonious co-operation, may be expected to carry out more efficiently, as well as more pleasurably, the great design of the Christian ministry. This arrangement becomes, of course, still more desirable

and important, when one who has long been sole Pastor is advanced in age.

You, my respected friends, and your beloved Pastor, are acting, therefore, we think, in perfect harmony with the principles of the New Testament, and in a manner highly calculated to promote the great end of your Christian fellowship. We have no dominion over your faith, but we would be the helpers of your joy. May I, therefore, be permitted to ask if some one of the officers of the Church will favour us with a statement of the circumstances which have led to the invitation of the Rev. George Thomson to become Co-Pastor in this Church with our much-respected brother, Dr. Burder?

Mr. DENNIS, a Senior Deacon of the Church, then gave the following statement:—

. Before I reply, my dear sir, on behalf of the Church, to the question you have asked, I may be permitted to state a few circumstances connected with its previous history.

It had its origin about the year 1672, when the Non-conformists were permitted, for a time, to open places for public worship. Its first Minister was the justly celebrated Dr. Bates, who, about the year 1684, had his goods seized and confiscated. He was succeeded by Mr. Billio, in 1699. Matthew Henry, whose praise is in all our Churches, commenced his short ministry here in 1712. He was succeeded by Mr. Barker, who resigned his charge in 1738, and was succeeded by Mr. Hunt. Mr. Palmer commenced his ministry in the year 1764, and continued to sustain the pastoral office during the long period of half a century.

At the commencement of the ministry of the Rev. Henry Forster Burder, the state of religion in this Church was at a very low ebb; but, by the blessing of God on the faithful exhibition of the truths of the Gospel by him, his unwearied diligence, and consistent deportment, a new order of things arose, which gradually expanded into a purer state of doctrine, Church order, development of Christian character, and consequent interest in the spread of the Gospel throughout the world.

Of the Ministers who engaged in the Ordination Service of the Rev. H. F. Burder, which was thirty-four years ago this very day, two only survive—the Rev. Dr. Smith and the Rev. John Burder. The other revered servants of Christ, Dr. Winter, Dr. Simpson, the Rev. George Burder, the Rev. George Collison, and the Rev. John Hooper, have entered into their rest; and their names, their characters, and their eminent services, have left a fragrance behind them.

At the time of Dr. Burder's entering on the pastorate, there were 80 members, of whom 4 only now survive. Since that period, 962 have been added to the Church, of whom upwards of 400 are now in fellowship with us.

I may be permitted to add, that as a further consequence of the blessing of God, not only has great prosperity attended the labours of our highly esteemed Pastor, but an eminent degree of uninterrupted peace and harmony has prevailed through the whole period of his pastorate.

For some years past, it has been the impression of the Deacons, and of many other attached friends of our Pastor, that the pressure of the pastoral charge over so large a Church, together with the labours of the Pulpit and of Bible Class instructions, must soon become too heavy to be sustained, without the danger of serious injury to his health. He himself was not disinclined to receive the aid of a colleague, whenever it should please the Head of the Church to provide one after his own

heart, for the office of Co-Pastor, and give him favour with the Church at large. To such a Minister we believe we have been directed by guidance from above.

The Rev. George Thomson was first introduced to our Pastor by his beloved and honoured friend, the Rev. Dr. Wardlaw; and the recommendation was expressed in terms which could not fail to produce on the Church a favourable impression.

Hearing that he was about to leave Aberdeen, he was engaged by Dr. Burder to pay us a visit. Having been favoured with his pulpit services for four successive Sabbaths, a meeting of the Church was convened, at which. on the recommendation of the Pastor and the Deacons. (of whom there are now eleven,) it was resolved, without one dissentient vote, that Mr. Thomson's acceptable services should be requested for two additional Sabbaths, and that a Church meeting should then be held, to ascertain, by ballot, whether the Church were prepared to unite in giving Mr. Thomson an invitation to accept the office of Co-Pastor. The ballot was accordingly taken; and, with the exception of two negative votes and a few who remained neutral, the Church united in giving an earnest and cordial invitation to Mr. Thomson to enter on the co-pastorate. In resolving on this invitation, it was no small increase of pleasure to the Church, and of gratitude to God, that they received from their Pastor the expression of his entire satisfaction in their choice, and the assurance that he cherished towards Mr. Thomson the most affectionate esteem and confidence.

It now only remains for me to entreat, in the name of the Pastor, the Deacons, and the Church, the earnest prayers of the Ministers and Christian brethren now present, that the unction of the Holy One may richly descend on both the Pastors, and on the entire Church and Congregation; and that the ministration of the truth of the Gospel among us may be, to a glorious extent, the power of God unto salvation.

I thank you, my dear sir, said Mr. Hunt, in the name of this large assembly, for a detail of circumstances so interesting, and so connected with all that bears upon your spiritual prosperity, and with all that is dear to the Saviour's heart.

In the Divine dispensations, circumstances often occur which in themselves are apparently trivial; but as the small links of a chain are essential to form the length required for its intended purpose, so these connect a series of events which bring about the purposes and accomplish the design of the Head of the Church. Such appear to be the incidents which connected Mr. Thomson's first visit to the metropolis with my personal acquaintance with him, and with his first interview with Dr. Burder. I have now great pleasure in asking you, my dear brother, to favour us with a statement of the considerations which have induced you to resign your pastoral charge at Aberdeen, and to accept of the invitation of this Church?

The Rev. George Thomson replied as follows:-

That the pastoral relation is one of great and solemn moment—not to be lightly entered on or lightly broken—is evidently implied in the question which has been proposed to me. And having a full and growing persuasion of the great importance of that truth, both to the comfortable and efficient discharge of the duties of the ministry, and to the prosperity, and increase, and influence of the Churches of the Redeemer, I am happy to be able to give a reply which will convince any one that my present position is in no degree indicative of disregard or forgetfulness of the sacred and abiding character of the pastoral relation.

My connexion with the Church in Blackfriars-street

Chapel, Aberdeen-which was of very short durationwas, from its commencement, avowedly conditional. When invited to take the pastoral oversight of that Church, I doubted very much whether the climate of Aberdeen might not prove unsuitable to the comparatively feeble health of my partner. My fears were, to some extent, overborne by medical and other opinions; still I felt constrained to couple my acceptance of the call of the Church with a condition, which was thus expressed: "It may be found, on trial, that the fears I entertained were not without foundation; in which case I will fully count on your ready and cordial acquiescence in my endeavours to effect a removal." In the course of a very few weeks, it appeared that my apprehensions were but too well founded. Serious and protracted illness overtook my wife; and the unprompted and unasked opinion of our medical adviser was repeatedly and strongly expressed, to the effect, that her restoration could not reasonably be counted on in such a climate. In these circumstances I had no alternative: conscience and feeling alike demanded my speedy removal. And it affords me unmingled satisfaction to say, that while the Church in Aberdeen did express deep regret at the dissolution of our brief union, they, in the most kind and honourable manner, acted up to the letter and spirit of the condition adverted to. A whisper of blame or of dissatisfaction, public or private, I do not know to have been breathed. On this point, therefore, generally the most painfully perplexing in such a case, I had no room for hesitancy. I felt deeply, and I feel still, for the beloved friends and brethren who have been thus bereft a second time within one short year of a pastor—a trial of severe and disastrous character in any circumstances, and peculiarly so in theirs, from the very high and affectionate esteem with which the public generally regarded my friend and predecessor, Mr. Kennedy, and

from the almost idolatrous love with which, after years of harmonious and prosperous intercourse, the Church who had the best opportunities of knowing his worth regarded him. I have, however, the full persuasion that the thing is from the Lord; and so confidently and prayerfully anticipate such an issue for that Church as shall lead them gratefully to say, "He hath done all things well."

With regard to my acceptance of the invitation of this Church, my statement shall be equally explicit. necessary removal from Aberdeen did not excite a doubt as to my continuance in the ministry. My obligations and my wishes were what they had been. My sphere only was to be changed for some other-and that He who had called me into His service was alone entitled to decide. It was my wish and prayer to be kept from all undue regard to inclination or interest in ascertaining duty, and to be wholly guided by His will. And that He has led me in this case, and not man, is my firm and satisfactory There was nothing of scheme or of conconviction. trivance on my part or on the part of any friend, so far as I am aware, to obtain introduction to the notice of the Church before whom I stand. The name and the reputation of my revered friend and father in the ministry I had long and well known. But that a Co-Pastor had been or was contemplated, I had not the slightest idea; nor, so far as I knew or yet know, had the esteemed friend to whose kindness I owe my introduction to Dr. Burder. In fulfilment of a promise made when I had neither the wish nor the prospect of soon revisiting England, I acquainted Dr. Burder with the position in which, in the gracious providence of God, I found myself placed. This led to my subsequent engagements in the Church, and to the invitation consequent on these engagements to become Co-The providential character of my introduction to this sphere, the cordiality of the invitation addressed to

me, and the affectionate and kindly expressed concurrence of Dr. Burder in that invitation—these considerations, coupled with the fact that the attainment of the object of my removal from a northern to a more genial climate might be most reasonably expected in Hackney, seemed to afford as explicit and unmistakeable indications of the will of God in the matter as could reasonably be looked for. Whether one's ability to contemplate an offered sphere of duty with cordial satisfaction be in any case a safe subsidiary indication of the course to be pursued, I shall not very positively affirm. But if it be, to the other considerations I might have added this; as the character and spiritual prosperity of the Church, and the prospect of being associated with one in whose example and fellowship I promised myself much that would profit and encourage, did create, and increasingly as my opportunities of observation and of prayerful reflection increased, a readiness and desire to comply with the Church's invitation.

Having in these observations endeavoured distinctly to answer the important question which you proposed to me, I might have presumed on your indulgence had I sat down, and allowed the other parts of this evening's service to be proceeded with. It has occurred to me, however, that, while not improper in itself, it may be satisfactory to the brethren who take part in these solemnities, or who afford us their countenance in them, to hear from me a brief statement of my views as to the grand object of the Christian ministry, and the means to be employed to secure it. On these points, therefore, I shall, without allowing myself to go into detail, offer a few observations.

The all-comprehensive object of the Gospel ministry I believe to be coincident with that of the mission and death of the Son of God—THE SALVATION OF SOULS. Salvation includes three cardinal blessings. There is justification,

which is the act of God in relation to the believing sinner. and which is founded solely on the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, the sinner's surety. In justification the legal relation of the sinner to God is at once and for The curse is removed; and, as freely parever altered. doned, the justified sinner has a legal title to the enjoyment of the blessing. There is also sanctification—the renewal of the whole man after the image of God, in order to his moral fitness for the inheritance of the kingdom. Sanctification commences in the regeneration or conversion of the sinner, and is the special work of the Spirit of God, on whose gracious influences the child of God is dependent for increase in all the excellences of renewed character. Then, as connected with the hope of pardon, as springing from it, and as nourished and strengthened by the conscious possession of increasing holiness, is peace of conscience, producing holy joy-the earnest of that perfect happiness which, when their bodies are raised and fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body, and re-united to their perfected souls, the redeemed shall eternally experience in heaven. To conduct to the possession and to the full enjoyment of this salvation, is the design for which the ministry has been instituted. Instrumentally this work is assigned to his servants, but it is the Lord Jesus Christ himself, who meritoriously, by his own blood, and efficiently, by his promised Spirit, accomplishes the salvation of his people.

The end of the ministry is to be sought by THE PREACH-ING OF THE WORD. The exhibition of the truth respecting Christ is, under God, sufficient to lead sinners to hope in the Divine mercy, and to admire and cultivate resemblance to the Divine character. Preaching, with a view to the salvation of souls, is our first and special business. Whatever takes a secondary place in our regards and exertions, preaching must not; "For it has pleased God

by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe." Of pulpit ministrations, Christ Jesus and Him crucified must be the pervading theme. This great truth must be proclaimed, not exclusively—for it does not occupy an exclusive place in the gospel of our salvation-not exclusively, but pre-eminently; not as the only truth, but as the central truth of the revelation of mercy; not as superseding other truths, but as imparting to them a power for the elevation of the whole character, and for the production of adequate consolation in life and death, wanting which no other truth has been or will be found efficient to sanctify or to console. But the whole counsel of God is to be duly unfolded. There must be no partialities—no concealments. Duties and privileges, precepts and encouragements, Bible statements and histories in all their variety and power and adaptedness to the character and circumstances of men, are to be expounded and enforced; and that, by the grace of God, in such a way as to explain and justify the assertion, that "all Scripture given by inspiration of God is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."

In preaching the word, it appears to me of paramount importance ever to keep in view, and to adopt such a style of address as will awaken or keep alive in the heart of hearers the recollection of the undoubted truth, that men hear the Gospel under a solemn obligation to believe it—that they are not mere machines, but responsible agents, who if they reject the Divine counsel do it at their peril;—that pardon, for example, is the free gift of God to believing sinners; but that it is still the sinner's duty to believe; so much and so truly his duty, that if any man do not believe, he will be justly held to have incurred a heavier condemnation, for "not having believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God;"—that while sanctification is the work of the Divine Spirit, and as such

is the believer's privilege, it is not His work in such a sense as to supersede our working, but that it is His in such a way as to lay us under a more solemn obligation to sanctify ourselves, or, as it is expressed by an apostle, "to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling."

To preach a full and a free salvation, then, through the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ—God manifest in flesh;—to press upon the unconverted repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ;—and to urge upon the converted sanctification, as at once a duty and a privilege—growing holiness, as the chief element of a present salvation, and completed holiness, as the crowning dignity of the world of glory;—this I take to constitute the chief department of the work of Christ's servants, in order to lead Gospel hearers, through the operation of the sovereign grace of God the Spirit, to a personal enjoyment of the salvation which the Gospel announces.

There are other places than the pulpit, and other modes of administering the truth besides that adopted in the pulpit, in which the servant of Christ may, with all propriety and advantage, be found prosecuting his great object. But as these, however important, are confessedly secondary to the preaching of the Gospel, on an occasion where brevity is demanded I content myself with this bare allusion to them.

Finally, permit me to say, that it was with very great misgiving, when I thought of my own unworthiness and unfitness, that I contemplated the occupancy of this sphere of exertion. Nor can I yet forget, even if I would, that this is not a cause of yesterday, that has been watched and prayed and laboured for, by worthy but still unheard-of men. It numbers among its former pastors the names of such men as Bates and Henry, and has long enjoyed—and God grant that it may continue very long to enjoy!—the mmistrations of my revered colleague, who,

as the history and condition of the Church demonstrate, has worthily followed in their footsteps. The recollection of these things, while it does, and will, I trust, yet more and more, exert a quickening influence upon my mind, awakens a measure of trembling solicitude—a solicitude, however, that is moderated and repressed, partly by the cheerful confidence I feel, that the Church will encourage and sustain and draw down, by fervent supplication, blessings on one whom they have chosen—partly by what is, to my own mind, a fact of the most pleasurable description, that in this sphere I labour not alone, but as the coadjutor of one to whom I feel myself increasingly bound by the ties of high regard and affection-whose counsel and friendly aid in stimulating and encouraging my feeble endeavours, will I am well assured never be withheld-and chiefly and especially by the promised grace of the chief May He accept the renewed dedication of myselt to His work; may He impart grace for its prosecution; may He crown the labours of His servants with enlarged success; may He bless His people with peace; and to Him in this Church, and throughout the whole Israel of God, let all blessing and praise be given for ever! Amen.

I am sure, my dear brother, said Mr. Hunt, that we have all listened with great pleasure to a statement of circumstances evidently marked by the interposition of Him who "worketh all things after the counsel of His own will."

I congratulate you, my dear sir, on your entrance upon this important sphere of ministerial labour, in connection with one by whom it has been so long and so successfully occupied. Your brethren in this metropolis will hail your entering in among them, and cheerfully give you the right hand of fellowship. And now may God Himself and our Lord Jesus Christ be with you, and strengthen you with all might by His Spirit in the inner man, and "make you perfect in every good work to do His will." May you continually hear His voice saying, as to Abraham, "I will bless thee, and thou shalt be a blessing."

To you, my dear friends of this Church and congregation, I would say only—Your eyes have long seen your teacher, you now see your teachers. Long, very long may that sight prove to be a source of increasing satisfaction and joy!

DR. BURDER then proceeded to offer solemn prayer for the blessing of God on the mind, the heart, and the ministry of his beloved colleague; after which the following discourse was addressed to the Rev. George Thomson, by the REV. ALGERNON WELLS, Pastor of the neighbouring Church at Clapton.

My dear Sir, the part assigned to me in the conduct of these solemnities is, that I should deliver to you an address suitable to the occasion—a service which I feel to be one of great interest and importance. Having, perhaps indiscreetly, undertaken this duty, let me at the outset bespeak your candid and favourable attention, while I endeavour to perform it to the best of my ability. I am encouraged by an entire confidence that I am addressing a friendly hearer in the presence of a sympathizing and devout assembly: nor can I allow myself to suspect it can be very unsuitable that I should occupy this place, seeing I was pressed into it by the judgment and affection of my ever honoured friend, the senior pastor of this Church, whose wishes come as near commands with me as those of any man living-and ought to do-for I owe him much, and honour him much, and both less than I should do but for deficiency on my part, first, when in youth he taught me, and now, in those years when the heart ought to be filled with all grateful recollections and ripe judgments of early benefits, excellent instructions, and admirable example.

First, dear Sir, let me offer you a brotherly welcome among us in the name of the associated churches and elders of this district. I have not, indeed, received their express commission to do this: but I have no doubt that I speak their sentiments and feelings, and have their full approval in thus giving them utterance. We are united together, as you know, in friendly fellowship, that we may obtain the pleasures and advantages of meetings for personal improvement and public usefulness. We are sure that in such proceedings your heart will be as our own, and expect in you a pleasant and valuable addition to our society: and, therefore, for the truth's sake that is in you, we hail you as a brother and fellow-labourer in the service and gospel of our One Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. You may find our manner of proceedings here more tranquil and sedate than that prevailing in some districts in these active and exciting times, but perhaps on that account more suited to the locality, in greater harmony with personal religion, and not less efficient in the long run for advancing both the local and the more expansive interests of the Saviour's kingdom.

It would be to you, dear Sir, unnecessary—in me unbecoming—that the present address should at all assume the form of a charge—one of those impressive discourses in which superior age and wisdom instructs, warns, and excites, a young brother just entering on the labours and difficulties of his public ministry. Such sermons to the preacher are in their place most appropriate, and carry with them moral and official weight in the highest degree. They are not, indeed, of the nature of commands, as from one in a higher to a subordinate in a lower rank of office

—but reason and Scripture combine to give them solemn import in the name of the Lord; and the spirit of liberty has run into sad mistake and excess wherever they can be either discontinued or lightly esteemed. But mine is now a humbler function. It is, as it were, dear Sir, to converse with you publicly on your present position, and future labours—to explain in the presence of the assembled eldership and people how we think of the times, of our duties, and of the Churches' welfare. Nor would it have pleased me less had this been cast into the form of a dialogue; our responsive sentiments might have had double value. But as I only am to speak-and you are but to hear-in the presence of these many witnesses, we both shall need, and may suitably ask, the prayers of all, that most eminent form of mutual service in which not even the labour of voice is necessary to confer a benefit of highest value.

Without, therefore, any selection of a passage of Scripture for discussion, I shall offer you some brief thoughts on the four following particulars—aiming therein that if my address shall be deficient in other merits, it may at least possess adaptation to our present purpose.

First, I shall offer you some remarks on the circumstance of your having been called to change the scene of your ministry at a period of life favourable for such a removal.

Secondly, On your being placed in the interesting and advantageous relation of Co-pastor with a brother now rich in experience, and ripe in many virtues and honours.

Thirdly, On your being stationed by God's providence in this particular Church and district, and on the kind of ministry and labour most adapted thereto.

Fourthly, On the character of these remarkable times in which you and I are called to labour—and on the manner in which we may hope best to meet their

urgent claims and to encounter or avoid their various dangers.

First, dear Sir, Providence has called you to change the scene of your ministry at a period of life favourable for such a removal. The great advantage of this circumstance is, that it furnishes many facilities for beginning your work a second time. It is one of those vain wishes in which we too frequently indulge, that we could live our lives over again: and one of the delusions we delight to practise on ourselves is, that if we could but do this, our second youth should be so wisely spent, our second entrance on life so well managed, as to avoid effectually the errors and neglects now so painfully discovered or remembered in the actual and only possible morning of our days. But you, Sir, have a real, practical, and available advantage in commencing afresh your ministry in a new sphere, while yet your habits, plans, and performances are not so fixed as to preclude improvement: and I quite believe that this consideration has not been first presented to your mind by my suggestion, but that you have already reflected on it, and turned it to practical use. You will have considered what you can beneficially alter in your former methods of study and preaching-economy of time-schemes for usefulness-and general course of life. Past experience may now be your monitor and guide. Many of your practices it will stamp with effectual confirmation, as known by trial to be wise and good-others it may admonish you to alter, as requiring correction or improvement. You will also feel a new impulse with new scenes, and repeat the first ardour of youth without its possible mistakes. You will find yourself roused by advancement, and cheered by success. It is not too late for you to form new attachments and friendships of a warm and lasting force; nor to accommodate yourself to those altered circumstances which require modified plans and

manners in all things not involving truth and conscience. A tree transplanted with skill, even after it has reached some considerable growth, into a kindly soil and aspect, may become more noble and fruitful than it would ever have been if not removed. I must congratulate you on the advantageous starting point from which you enter on this new sphere of labour. You have gained experience -have acquired facility-bring with you some store of discourses—and have the aid of a beloved colleague in this pastoral charge. All these circumstances will contribute to place time at your disposal—precious time—which you will carefully husband, and employ to best advantage in diversified study, devotion, and activity. You will not blame me if I mingle some advice with these congratulations. May I suggest that you should every week prepare, as well as you can—at your highest point of performance one sermon? that you should never reproduce in public one of your former discourses without careful review and all possible improvement? that the manner of public address, too little regarded by us all, should be adapted to the perhaps different tastes of your new charge? that the careful preparation of new discourses, or review of those formerly preached to other hearers, is needful in order that your own mind may have that warm and living interest in them, by which comes a natural and an earnest delivery of them, imparting to the hearers a sense of their freshness, reality and power? But I seem sliding into what it was my purpose to avoid—the giving of a charge.

2. Let me, then, to avoid this risk, proceed to advert to the circumstance that you are to be associated in this new charge as Co-pastor with an honoured senior colleague. This is neither the time nor the place for flattery, or even eulogy: but it is a very appropriate occasion on which to pay a tribute of grateful respect, and to bear the testimony due from truth to worth. I congratulate you, dear Sir,

that you are to stand in the relation of Co-pastor with honoured Dr. Burder. I have said you are not too far advanced beyond youth to form new and strong attachments: I am sure your colleague is not too far advanced into age to win such regards. If you, dear Sir, are not too old to learn, you will find my friend not too old to instruct. He is yet, thank God, in the vigour of his observant mind, and in the warmth of his earnest zeal for usefulness. The age has not passed by him in its rapid movements so that he should belong to the past rather than to the present. He will think with you and work with you in wise adaptations to passing events. will be no strife or jealousy between you. The younger will yield deference before it is sought, and the senior will impart spontaneous encouragement and support. There will be mutual respect, confidence, and co-operation. Unity in public will be sustained by friendship in private. You will show that in our churches the Christian spirit, and the Christian virtues, smooth every difficulty, and render liberty and equality elements of order instead of occasions for strife: and that Christian excellence should be required for the successful working of Christian institutions, need be to no man a surprise or a stumbling-block. Your colleague began his ministry in this place, the junior associate of his then venerable predecessor: now, therefore, that time has changed his position, and made him at the end of thirty-four laborious years the elder brother, he will the better know the heart of a young man, and the effect upon it of confiding and cheering encouragement from honoured age. So in all this there is everything to hope, little to fear. You will be true yoke-fellows, to your own great comfort, to the great benefit of this flock, and to the honour of your Master and your cause.

In our polity and circumstances it may be often preferable, more often necessary, that while a Pastor retains the vigour of his powers he should preside alone over his charge. All other considerations apart, financial necessity may enforce this arrangement. It may in general secure greater unity of action in the ministry, and of affection in the people. But where all circumstances facilitate a copastorate, and, as in the present instance, a well-adjusted connexion between an elder and a junior Minister in the service of the same church can be established, very happy results can hardly fail of being realised. Pulpit ministrations will be both enriched and varied-schools and Bible classes well conducted-pastoral oversight and intercourse increased—and all works of benevolence prosecuted with redoubled vigour. We cannot therefore but regard this Church as a favoured people under a joint pastoral care so harmonious and efficient: and both the shepherds and the flock have our fervent prayers for their lasting peace and prosperity.

3. Then, thirdly, dear Sir, I have some few thoughts to offer on your being stationed by Providence in this parcular church and district, and on the kind of ministry and labour adapted thereto. We in this locality, dear Sir, are accustomed to speak somewhat highly of our position. We think the lines have fallen to us in pleasant places. Our near vicinity to this great city enables us at once to receive its influences and to join in its movements, while yet we have quiet in our sanctuaries and our Sabbaths. We are in sufficient strength for mutual defence and united effort. We are not lone and dejected, like many of our brethren in rural and hostile neighbourhoods. the midst of society, intelligence, and refinements. Nor do we think it for us a small advantage that we occupy this locality, rather than the opposite extremity of the metropolis, where splendour and gaiety spread round them many influences penetrating even to that class of society to which we belong. But these congratulations are not

boasts. They are hinted at in gratitude, but for usefulness no less. Perils and responsibilities always attend on advantages. We find ourselves in danger of settling into ease in Zion-of becoming too respectable for all avowals of principle, all forms of activity, all instances of nonconformity to the world. We feel called on by our position to be more liberal in our contributions, more active in our labours, than less favoured brethren-yet doubt whether our liberality rises to the measure of our obligation, and whether our activity is so conducted as to be never in excess, and always favourable to devotion. We are not quite sure that our dear youth are in no danger from the attractions of many plausible but equivocal entertainments provided in this great city, where all good and all evil are found in every kind, in every degree, in every mixture. Then we find ourselves straitly bound by sectarian and social distinctions in this land of parties, where classes seem settling into castes, so that co-operation and intercourse are now all in separate and narrow circles, out of which it seems impracticable to emerge even to do good. Lastly, we see ourselves surrounded with multitudes on whom we are exerting either no influence at all, or such as is very indirect and feeble-whom we cannot reach, through prejudices on their part, and conventionalisms on our own: an ever-widening chasm separating the respectable from the industrial classes, the church from the world it ought to pervade and bless.

Into the midst of such scenes and circumstances as I have alluded to, you have entered as the Pastor of a Christian Church now far advanced into the second century of a consistent and undeviating testimony to the truths on which it was founded, and exhibiting the vigour and stability of age without its decays. Such an endurance amidst adverse influences, and with no resources but such as its own truth has won from willing hearts, is no weak

confirmation of the cause and the principles we adopt. So that when we examine our foundations and our structure, to ascertain whether we may safely add thereto, we find everything sound, and equal to any pressure that can be required. You will soon judge for yourself—you have probably already judged-whether I have correctly indicated the position on which you have entered. secure of your accordance in the following views of the kind of ministry needed in this place. Doubtless you will find the public preaching of the Gospel here, as in all times and places, the chief ordained means of the usefulness of the ministry, and of the good of the people. Nothing can work a change in the place assigned to this primary institute by its Divine Author. But Hackney will require an exhibition of the Gospel enlightened, enlarged, and vigorous in substance, and in manner natural, earnest, and warm-hearted. Pastoral care follows next and close in importance: the active and pleasing labour of the Pastor in prayer-meetings, Bible classes, church proceedings, visitation of families, of the sick, and of the young. Then education claims serious care-Sunday, infant, and daily schools—wisely promoted and encouraged. Then our long-cherished work for the spread of the Gospel by missions at home and abroad—that work enjoined by the Saviour and inherited from our fathers, in which no difficulties, no delays, no disappointments can damp our ardour, or change our constancy-will ask your advocacy and your counsels. Even yet there will be required some further attention to labours in general benevolence, enlightenment, and social progress. can skill in promoting and guiding that habit of combination for important objects, which is the very character of our times, and of such universal adoption, be dispensed with. And for conducting all these diversified labours in public, there must be in private a proportionate and well

regulated course of reading, study, devotion, and selfdiscipline. Ah, who is sufficient for our work, and for our times! How greatly do ministers need the help of Godthe prayers and candour of men! The period in which we live is continually increasing its demands on all classes. An amount of effort, a scale of efficiency, is exacted in every department, such as former periods never required. The ministry has its full share of this strong pressure. One thing, however, dear Sir, is observable—a fixed, concentrated ministerial effort can now be alone successful: and wherever such labour is employed, there it is success-In and round this metropolis, it might be shown, were not such an enumeration both invidious and unnecessary, that no eminence of ministerial talent will secure desirable success without this fixed addictedness to each man's proper work and sphere, but that with it even moderate abilities are found adequate to most happy results. My observation leads me to think this the exact. the one thing needful to ministerial success in our times. The like thing is wanted everywhere. In trade, in schools, in professions, in service, concentration is the one element of success. Perhaps this is so always and everywhere. It may not be a peculiarity of our times, or of the ministerial work; but only made conspicuous and remarkable amidst competition, hurry, and irregular effort. Yet I cannot but observe, that perhaps a habit of caring too much for general, too little for particular duties, may have been a besetting evil among ministers in our stirring age, and that the success of those who have escaped this snare is therefore the more observable. However, dear Sir, you will give yourself to this Church, and in so doing you will want for neither co-operation nor success—you will not fail of the Divine blessing, nor of the approval of your own mind.

4. Fourthly, I proposed to offer some observations on

these remarkable times in which we are called to labour. and on the manner in which we may hope best to meet their urgent claims, and to encounter or avoid their various dangers. On the whole, I can perceive no ground for heavy complaints against these times as worse than those that went before, or as threatening disastrous influences on those to come. Rather, I hope that we are reaping great advantages from the past, and preparing greater for the future. It is doubtless our duty, as watchmen on the walls of Zion, to observe the times, and as leaders in the churches to have understanding of the times, knowing what Israel ought to do in wise adaptation to their peculiar character. Yet this may be overdone. We may note the times, till we forget the Bible; and we may inquire after new remedies for new evils, till we overlook or mistrust the universal, invariable fitness and power of the Gospel for every age and state of the human race. Let us be neither heedless of the times, nor absorbed in exploring them: but just regard them so far as lawfully to adapt the manner of our ministry to the forms which contemporary society has assumed.

Now, it is observable, that the present period has revived what is called the æsthetic taste; that is, a taste for clothing what is spiritual, and ideal, and beautiful, in expressive forms and sounds. This taste is plainly seen in the large increase of decorated buildings, books, paintings, and furniture. It pushes for entrance into religious observances, and in many quarters has gained admittance. It is a passion that tends very naturally and insidiously to excess. Our fathers, who saw some of its worst mischiefs, drove it far away from them as an unclean spirit. Hence our worship is bare of all attractions and influences derived from this source. So let it continue. But at such a time, and in the presence of such a state of the general mind, it becomes very important that our unadorned

solemnities should be conducted with every advantage of a really impressive manner: nothing heedless, nothing coarse, nothing wearisome, permitted in our simple ritual. Sermon, song, prayer, scripture, baptism, sacrament, the aspect of the people, the stillness of the sanctuarv-all made truly æsthetic; that is, all made to embody and express deep thought, true feeling, and genuine worshipthe soul of man, and the spirit of God, and the power of truth, breathing through them all: for we want no other forms than those we have—we want but that all those forms shall be filled with spirit. Yet this must be done, or our worship, cold and abstract, wanting in vitality as well as in beauty, acting neither through the senses nor on the heart, will repel rather than attract; and we, through want of care in forms, shall drive many where they will find either nothing but form, or such excess of rites as ends in the same death of all real spirituality.

Then, ours are overbusy, overworked times. We can obtain for general society no short-hours law. Our young men in counting-houses, shops, and professions, are compelled to make all days long. Our elder brethren in the same walks of life are, in addition, burdened with heavy cares. A like pressure of toil, and a more painful pressure of straitened means, weighs down the workingclasses. Even of our females, but a favoured few escape this widespread evil. Some in household cares, still more others earning their own subsistence, are greatly overtasked. How welcome and benignant, then, the institution of the Sabbath! and how happy those who have learned to estimate, spend, and enjoy it aright! dear Sir, how needful that we Ministers should address ourselves to our public duties on each successive Lord's Day, mindful of the kind of week our assembled hearers have probably passed! How concerned, how skilful ought we to be, to render the sanctuary a scene of most scasonable refreshment, of most salutary impression! to bring the eternal to bear powerfully on minds too conversant with the temporal! to draw souls up into a calm, holy region, that they may rest on the Sabbath-day according to the commandment! to make the Sabbath repair the evils of the week it follows, and prepare for the conflicts of the week it introduces! Never were Sabbaths more needed than now; never was it more necessary than now to make them avail for counteracting worldliness, relieving anxieties, and putting joy and sweetness into careworn souls.

Then, the present is a period of diffused intelligence. The pulpit is no longer so superior to the pew in knowledge, as formerly. The press has assumed, above all former experience, the task of general instruction. We meet a people not only worn with care and work, but conversant with the knowledge and thought provided copiously in serial and periodical literature. It is true that the knowledge so gained is not very exact or profound; but it is very considerable, and is presented in our current literature with much liveliness and many Moreover, sermons are not now the only attractions. public discourses heard by our people. They frequent lectures often displaying great abilities, on interesting topics, in both style and manner. Hence arises need that Ministers should preach well. The sermon must not be suffered to sink below the lecture: it must meet, at least on equal terms, the expectations and the intelligence of the hearers. Ours is indeed a sacred function. preach by a divine command, and succeed by a divine blessing; but neither is the command fulfilled, nor can the blessing be expected, till all diligent and necessary use of means has been employed; and I believe we have strangely misconceived the times we are seeking to interpret, if we expect toleration for poor sermons, or attendance upon a feeble ministry, by virtue of a mere plea of sacred institution.

This, again, is a period in which benevolent activity is no longer peculiar to Christian Churches, or directed solely to the relief of spiritual necessities. Many parties are now abroad in the field of charitable exertion, who till lately were strangers there; and many social wants are now acknowledged to require relief which till lately were quite neglected. Education, sanitary reform, benefit insurances, have become prominent objects of active concern. Many who profess no serious religion, and some who profess no religion at all, have come forward as advocates and labourers in these departments. I believe. indeed, in this as in every good movement, religion led the way, missions diffused the spirit, churches originated the sentiment, however little honour may be given where this honour is due. But the pulpit, I think, should be neither silent nor cold on these and kindred topics. A kindly and generous care for all human interests, for all human welfare, is graceful in those who preach the Gospel of the Great Prince of all benefactors of the bodies and souls of men. There is no need that on such subjects we should deliver entire and set sermons, but occasional and brief allusions to them will find appropriate place on many occasions: and a living sympathy with the world for which we labour, and amidst which both preachers and hearers live, is one element of the felt reality and life with which our ministrations ought ever to be imbued.

Popery, covert and avowed, has sprung of late into new life and unwonted activity. Sacramental efficacy and priestly functions are the two main pillars of the system. These are very taking notions—to the people easy, to the Ministry gainful; but to souls, to religion, to morals, destructive. Many declare themselves not afraid of Popery. I own myself alarmed; but with the fear that

braces for conflict, not with that which flies from the encounter. We need not, I think, my dear friend, preach against Popery in formal refutations of its dogmas and its claims; but I think we ought most strenuously to preach against it by an energetic testimony to the sole divinity and authority of Scripture, redemption by Christ, justification by faith, renewal by the Spirit, personal access to God for every man by the one only Mediator, right doctrine on the means of grace and the spirituality of religion. Dear Sir, may it be your honour and your joy to bear a faithful part in maintaining this faith once delivered to the saints. Such doctrines as have been indicated should always, should now, be the staple and very heart of the Gospel ministry.

The present temper of the times seems averse to whatever is narrow and sectarian. It looks for broad views and aims. It has grown weary of strifes on minute The nonreligious world more than ever differences. upbraids the professing world with its petty disputes and idle separations. This is a good, though often misdirected feeling. But indeed, my friend, we do need to widen, if possible, our range of influence and scope of action; and to do this, must preach on great themes, with large views and a comprehensive spirit. Even among truly religious people, you will not find many who lay any very great stress on the different modes of worship and discipline among those who hold the one Catholic faith. The religious instinct is too high, the Christian heart is too warm Can we lament this? No, it is noble—it is accordant with the genius of the Gospel—it is in harmony with genuine Congregationalism, which ever cared for principles more than modes, for spirit more than forms. You will know how and when to state the things wherein we stand distinguished and separate from other Churches; but, my friend, to win souls, to publish salvation, to open

wide your views and aims, will be the delight of your soul, and the very object of all your public ministrations.

And however times vary, man and the Gospel—man's want of the Gospel, and the adaptation of the Gospel to man—these never change. To man the sinner proclaim Christ the Saviour, to man bewildered proclaim the Bible his guide, to man distressed proclaim religion his true consolation, to dying man proclaim eternal life; and you cannot miss your aim, or fail of your object, or lose your reward. And, in the evening of a successful life, may you here receive a colleague, as now you are received with joy and love!

The following address to the Church was then delivered by the REV. JOHN KENNEDY, M.A.

You will readily believe, my dear brethren, that I join in this solemn service with mingled feelings. While I welcome my friend and brother to London, and congratulate you on his settlement among you, I cannot forget that your gain is the loss of another Church, a Church which had my own first love, and was worthy of it. It were difficult to describe my satisfaction on learning that one so long tried and approved had accepted their unanimous invitation to succeed me in the pastoral office. But now they are again without a shepherd. The providence which has rendered it necessary for their pastor to leave them, is one which we cannot dispute. And may I not hope that there are praying hearts in this assembly whose earnest supplications will mingle with his and mine, that the Chief Shepherd will watch over them, and send them speedily a man of God, who shall feed them with knowledge and spiritual understanding?

This, dear brethren, is a happy day with you. I trust it will be memorable. Thirty-four years ago to-day your Senior Pastor was ordained to the office of the Christian ministry. You have enjoyed much peace and prosperity. Your pastor has been loved and honoured by his brethren. And now, while I trust it may be said of him that "his eye is not dim nor his natural force abated," it is his privilege to receive the aid and co-operation of a younger brother in whom he can confide, and whose natural disposition and Christian character and ministerial attainments will increasingly commend him to him and you. have been spared the trial of an interval between the presidency of one pastor and the settlement of another. dreary desolateness and bewilderment which are the lot of orphan Churches have not been yours, and to-day, in the enjoyment of a peaceful and unbroken fellowship, your eves behold your teachers.

The echo of a more distant past than that to which your own memories extend, is heard among you on this occasion. In the honoured succession of pastors who have laboured in this part of Christ's vineyard, stand, as we have heard in the statement of one of your deacons, the names of such men as Dr. Bates and Matthew Henry. Your descent from an ancestry so holy and universally honoured, involves both privilege and responsibility. The voices of the present and the past combine with the voice of the Unchangeable in saying to you,—

"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father who is in heaven is perfect."

These words are recorded in Matthew v. 48. They are the words of Christ. Let us meditate on them. And may the Holy Spirit open our hearts to receive them!

There are perhaps who do not in express terms deny the legitimacy of our Lord's command, who notwithstanding

say secretly in their hearts, "The standard is too high, we cannot attain to it," and then quietly set it aside. But this shelving of Divine words, this practical evasion of them, is in every case undutiful and perilous, and in the present instance the effect would be to legalize sin. If it be right to enjoin every duty separately and by itself, it cannot be wrong to make all duties meet together and enjoin them in one word-"Be ye perfect." If every excellence and grace and virtue and attainment be the fit subject of separate inculcation, all their rays of light may be concentrated in a focus-"Be ye perfect." Find the duty which it is lawful to omit, or the sin in which it is lawful to indulge, or the shortcoming with which it is lawful to be contented,—and to the extent of that duty or sin or shortcoming we shall allow you to subtract from the obligation of this command. But you will not make the attempt. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," is a law with which no one quarrels, or whose justice and obligation at least all are prepared to confess. And the command of our Lord is only another form of the same law. It erects the same standard. And so long as there are depths in perfection which we have not explored, and heights which we have not attained, so long as there is grace in Christ to bring us nearer and nearer to God and to himself, our eye must be fixed on no goal, and our heart content with no state, short of our Lord's requirement.

Not to insist on views so obvious, allow me to direct your attention to two forms into which the services of this evening suggest the propriety of throwing the injunction of our text.

1. As a Church, you are called on to-night to aim at breadth or completeness of character. Your Father in heaven causes His sun to shine on the evil and on the good. "So," said Christ to His disciples, "do ye." Not only love your friends,

but your enemies. Do the one as well as the other. "Be perfect." Be complete, not one-sided in your goodness.

Brethren, this breadth or completeness of character is a rare attainment. Men excel intellectually rather in individual gifts than in general and well-proportioned strength. And Christians excel spiritually rather in individual graces than in well-proportioned holiness. man is distinguished by unbending integrity and stern adherence to principle, another by the softer grace of tender love and sanctified amiableness. How few combine the severer and the gentler!-between which, let us be assured, there is no natural alienation, and which, when combined, give to the character at once strength and beauty. One man is liberal, and another is active. But the giver of money seems to imagine sometimes that he purchases exemption from labour, and the doer of work that he may save his money. Sometimes a man is both liberal and active, but his tone of mind is far from being spiritual. He is engrossed with the machinery of Christian operation, and his heart possesses but a very scanty measure of the holy oil of Christian sentiment and feeling. And what is stranger far, you sometimes meet with a man whose tone is deeply spiritual, but who is neither liberal nor active. Talk of Christian experience, and he is quite at home. His lips overflow from the fulness of a heart which seems to be richly imbued with grace, and bathed in the very joy and light of heaven. Hear him address God in prayer. His language is the language of a child whose heart is full of love to his father. It is the language of a soul which has known much of spiritual conflict and spiritual victory, which has passed through much experience both of the cloud and sunshine, and which, while deeply sensible of want, adores confidingly the fulness which is treasured up in Christ. You conclude that the suppliant who can thus pray lives near to God, and is ripening for glory. But follow him from the throne of grace, and you find him without heart to give or heart to work. This is a great mystery. I do not understand it, and I shall not attempt to solve it. The truth of such a man's character is surrounded by a cloud which I cannot "To his own Master he standeth or falleth." penetrate. . The relations of life often betray incompleteness of character very strikingly. Follow a man into business, and you find every virtue to adorn and sustain him; but as a Church member the same man is perhaps a cypher. occupies a pew, and does not absent himself from the Lord's table; but as to every thing besides, his membership is not felt or realised. There is, however, a more anomalous case still. You find a Church member, zealous and useful, interesting himself in all that concerns the honour and prosperity of the Church, a brother amidst brethren-and the same man holds a very ambiguous position in the world. There is a want of transparency in his transactions, and men stand in doubt of him; or there is a want of system and energy, and the condition of his affairs is often unsatisfactory. Could we examine one hundred professors of religion separately in these three positions—at home-in the Church-in the world-what varieties! what anomalies! How many should we find like a portrait which can be viewed only in one light, or a statue made to be looked at only from one position! Find the proper point from which to view the statue, and you admire it. from that point, and its beauty and symmetry are gone—you can scarcely imagine it to be the same thing. How few of the hundred would bear to be gazed on and examined from two of the three positions we have named! And how many fewer still from the three! Blessed be God, there are on whom you may gaze from every position you can take in relation to them; and every aspect will elicit new beauties, and

render the proportions more striking and undoubted,

These living models of well proportioned completeness illustrate the command of our Lord, "Be ye perfect."

Churches often exhibit collectively all the varieties and characteristics of individuals. They take their mould sometimes from pastors, sometimes from a few leading members, sometimes from unseen causes which cannot be discovered, sometimes from circumstances hidden in the dim past, but whose force is not yet spent, and propagates itself through one generation to another. Could you gather from all the churches in a district the excellences which distinguish each, and concentrate these excellences into one body, you might have such a Church as every Church ought to be. In one you would find brotherly love and concord. In another, zeal and public spirit. In a third, scriptural enlightenment and knowledge. In a fourth, fervour and spirituality. In a fifth, faithful discipline and purity. A sixth would furnish you with an example of obedience to the apostolic command-"Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free;" and a seventh, with an example of obedience to the equally apostolic command-"We beseech you, brethren, to know them who labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake."

It is not to be expected, I shall be told, that every Church should combine in itself all these excellences. Why not? Which of them is incompatible with the rest? Which of them is unattainable? Which of them will the law of Christ dispense with? Which of them is of little value? Why then not expect to combine them all in the character of one Church? Is not their combination the very thing commanded by the Head of the Church—"Be ye perfect?" Is their combination beyond the power of His grace? Or does it not enter into His design? Why not expect it? Not expect all the seven colours in the

rainbow, when you see the arch forming across the heavens—not expect all the signs and fruits of summer, when the renovating power of the Creator hath accompanied the bygone spring!

Brethren, we sin, we wrong Christ and his grace, when we do not expect to find Churches growing up into the full stature of perfect manhood; when we feel that it is a matter of course that the body should be stinted or decrepit, or diseased, or even mutilated; having disease of the heart, it may be, or disease of the head, with palsied limbs or jaundiced eyes; or perhaps lacking some organ altogether, either an eye, or an ear, or a hand, or a foot. It was not to form such a body that Christ lives.

Next to the pain with which we regard fallen man, is the pain with which we regard the fragmentary character of the goodness which most men attain even when renewed. Whereunto shall we liken it? You stand on the margin of a lake when the winds are bound. From its placid bosom the beauties of the surrounding scene are reflected as from a polished mirror. The majestic tree, the "fairy flower," the greensward, and the rock, and the mountain, the sun, and the golden beams which illumine heaven, are all thrown back on you smilingly. And as you gaze into the waters before you, you see in their depths a world brighter and more beautiful than the real world around you—

"As if there lay beneath the wave, Secure from trouble, toil, and care, A world than earthly world more fair."

Such was human nature, when, as formed by the Divine hand and inspired by the Divine breath, it reflected purely, and placidly, and unbrokenly, all the excellences and beauties of the Divine law—every excellence and beauty deriving a glow of warmth and life from the soul, from whose pure depths they were thrown out in visible and palpable forms.

But as you stand on the margin of the lake, a storm arises, the waters are troubled, and wave lashes wave in its fury. Where is now the liquid landscape, the reflection of all the glory and beauty and majesty of the scene around you? You gaze, but it is not. There remains not one fragment of it. The agitated bosom of the waters knows nothing of what it had but an hour before exhibited so truly and brightly. They are strangers to each other. Such is human nature when subjected to the disturbing and deranging forces of sin. The Divine law finds it no longer a reflection of its beauty and glory.

You still stand on the margin of the lake. An unseen power allays the storm. The winds cease, but there is not a perfect calm. The waves no longer roar, but the waters are slightly ruffled. And as you gaze you observe the landscape again forming itself on the surface. But not as before. It is thrown back upon you in fragments. and rocks are incongruously mixed. One object is brightly reflected by the surface of the ripple which is now passing before you, and another by the surface of the next. But they do not appear in their natural relation, and more than half their beauty is lost in consequence. You see every thing in parts and pieces, nothing in all its beauty, and many things so confusedly that you can scarcely recog-Such is human nature under the operation of nise them. the Gospel. The disturbing force of sin has been subdued, and the law of God is again reflected from living man. But, alas! it is in most fragmentary forms; disjointed and broken pieces, rather than a uniform and consistent whole, attest the fresh communion which has been established between the law of God and the soul of man.

Our illustration is designed to exhibit a fact, not to offer

an apology. We find it true of individual men and of Churches. And the truer it is in reality, the more need there is to enforce our Saviour's command, "Be ye perfect." Isolated virtues, one-sided excellences, fragmentary graces—these are not our Lord's requirement. If he commends us for what we are, he reminds us of what we are not, and says with authority, "See that ye excel in this grace also. Be ye perfect."

Secondly. You are called on to-night to rise to the height of the requirements of your age and position. "Be ye perfect."

You will not be offended that I do not assume that you have already attained, either are already perfect. Where is the Church that is up to the standard which the demands of our age and position require? The responsibility of ministers in this great metropolis is the frequent subject of remark. And most fitly. I tremble—and which of my brethren, and even of my fathers, does not tremble in view of it? But the responsibility of Churches—is it less? Churches are often said to be what ministers make them; but the converse may be said with nearly equal truth—ministers are often what Churches make them. And my province at present is to speak of the latter.

My dear brethren, when we talk to you of your age and position, our words perhaps seem shadowy and dreamy, fit enough to point a sentence or inspire a declamation, but containing no reality of which you can lay hold, or of which it concerns you to make any practical use. But we mean them not so. We mean to speak of a grave something which concerns you most deeply. We mean to stimulate you to deserve the commendation bestowed on certain men of Issachar, who had understanding of the times to know what Israel ought to do. When the Caffre chief, who visited us a few years ago, was lingering in the lobby of the House of Commons, he was asked by Dr.

Philip what he was thinking? He replied, "I have been thinking how strange it is that I have seen within there the spring of the power which moves the world." Do not the Churches of London sustain some such relation to Christianity, in all parts at least of the British dominions? There may, it is true, be life and energy in the extremities when there is coldness and death at the heart. In the spiritual system to which we belong, warmth and power may originate in obscure and distant parts, and be drawn thence to the metropolis. But it is still true that the metropolis is the centre to which distant parts look for holy impulse, and whose example is of tremendous power for good or evil. Of the Churches in this metropolis it may be said emphatically, that they do not live unto themselves.

If earnest-hearted professors ask us how the Churches to which they belong may rise to the requirements of their position, our answer will perhaps appear too simple, and quite unequal to anything so great. But all practical truth is simple; and all great doings originate in very simple principles.

First. Let every right-hearted Christian realise his individual responsibility. Let him not lose himself in the mass, or wait until the mass around him be moved. He has his own obligation to Christ, unaffected by the obligation of others. He shall have to bear his own burden, unaffected by the position of others in the day of accounts. Let him realise this acknowledged truth. And then,

Secondly. Let him return to the word of God for his absolute and sovereign practical guide. "Return," we say. We assume that, more or less, the great bulk of Christians are influenced and moulded now by the maxims of the world and of a conventional Christianity, rather than by the simple and authoritative dicta of the word of God. What we want is a return to individual and simple-hearted allegiance to the authority of our King, Jesus Christ. The

immediate result will be, that Christians will cease to ask how their brethren act, what their brethren give, what the world and their brethren will think or say of them. the further consequence will be, a revision of the standard by which they have regulated their lives and their benefactions. They will then be less conformed to the world in their lives, and less conformed to the Church in their benefactions. Their ambition will not be to have a place among the princes of the earth, but among the princes of heaven. And it will be, if not the boast, at least the joy of the Churches of Christ, to have in their fellowship, not the men whose mansions and equipages vie with those of nobles, but the men whose deeds of faith and love vie with those of the men of other times, who sold their possessions to maintain an infant Church, and devoted their lives to the honour and work of their Master.

Brethren, do we ask too much when we ask that every one of you will seek, through Divine grace, to realise his individual responsibility, and will immediately return to the word of God for your absolute and sovereign guide in all things? This is our prescription for the cure of the evils which afflict the Christian Church. This is our plan for replenishing the exhausted treasuries of all Christian Societies. This is the only way we know in which our Churches may rise to the demands of their age.

We have no specific that will save from the necessity of treading in the olden path of self-denial, and nonconformity to the world. We cannot find in the intelligence and refinement of our age, or amid our inventions and discoveries, any elements of success which will supersede the necessity of a rigid and honest recourse to the first principles of practical Christianity. And we trace much of the evil which throws so deep a gloom over the Churches of our land to this, that these principles are either buried beneath a superincumbent mass of worldly maxims and conventional

usages, or choked in their growth by the thorns and briars of worldly aims and worldly passions.

Brethren, let us return to the first faith and the first love of the Church of Christ. The path leads through the valley of Achor. There has not yet been discovered any where else a door of hope. Humiliation, deep, contrite, general—nothing else will dispel the evil elements which have gathered into our spiritual atmosphere, and which now render it so dense, so noxious and dangerous. Nothing else will bring down those showers which will change the entire aspect of the world, or secure to us the full and uninterrupted enjoyment of that sunshine which visits us now only in feeble and straggling rays. Would we have the blessing, we must pass to it by the ancient road of humiliation, faith, and prayer. Whether we look at the world which spreads itself out to all the ends of the earth, or the world which is crowded into our own great city, the evil spirits over which we have to invoke the name of Jesus will not go out but by prayer and fasting. But by these weapons faithfully wielded, Christ will "cause us to triumph in every place."

To ancient Zion, while sitting in the dust, afflicted and desponding, with her harp unstrung and her soul covered with confusion and shame, the voice came—"Awake, awake." Were the Universal Church our auditory at this moment, without overlooking anything that is good in her character, anything that is energetic in her efforts, anything that is godlike in her ambition, or anything that is cheering in her prospects, we should feel ourselves justified in taking up the echo of that ancient voice, and saying to her—"Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion, put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem! Shake thyself from the dust, loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion." And the first response we should be glad to hear from an awaking Church, would be in the

form of an earnest cry to heaven—" Awake, awake, O arm of the Lord! awake as in the ancient days, as in the generations of old!" Jehovah will save by HIMSELF, not by bow, nor by sword, nor by battle. The withholding or withdrawing of his Spirit is the heaviest calamity with which we can be visited. It is then that Ichabod is truly written on the house of God. When he leaves his temple. the glory is departed. No talent can compensate his absence. We may declaim and reason of temperance, righteousness, and judgment, in strains of loftier eloquence than that before which Felix trembled. The multitude may crowd and gape and be delighted, and may have all their natural sentiments aroused and thrilled, now terribly and now joyously. But what avails it all? The sound of the preacher's voice is in their ears as a very lovely song, " of one that playeth well on an instrument;" but their hearts remain unconverted, and they go down to the grave with a lie in their right hand.

Were your religious liberties in danger, brethren, were the freedom with which you now meet under your own vine threatened with extinction, vou would arise as one man, brace every nerve for the conflict, and cry to heaven and earth for help. But what end serves freedom, if Churches enjoying it do not work out the ends of their fellowship, their own spiritual advancement, and the conversion of sinners? And that they cannot do without the attendant agency of the Spirit of God. Take from us our liberties, and we shall mourn the lost treasure, but still live; take from us our property and our friends, and though our hearts be overwhelmed, it may be we shall only prosper the more; put us into the furnace of persecution, and our religion, like the bruised and burning incense, will send forth its perfume the more strongly and widely; but, take from us the Holy Spirit, and our religion will become at once profitless to ourselves and others, and fit only to be cast out and trodden under foot of men.

What anxieties, then, can be so fitting on this solemn occasion, as that, throughout the Pastorate which has just begun, you may enjoy individually and socially the presence and power of the Holy Spirit? Deprecate on your knees everything that will grieve Him; covet and cherish His blessing as your strength and your life; let earnest effort and most humble dependence go together. Each member of the Church realising his individual responsibility, taking the word of God submissively and unreservedly for his sovereign rule, serving God in his own place and with his own heart, and conjoining untiring labour with fervent prayer, you will "be perfect," and rise to the height of the requirements of your age and position. God will bless you, and the union which has been recognised this night will be one of great usefulness and of great honour.

My dear brethren, if you would have in a very few words my idea of the duties you owe to your Junior Pastor—of your duties to his colleague I need not speak—they seem to me to connect themselves very naturally with a simple fact which will not burden your memories:—He is one, you are many.

When you come together for public worship and instruction, remember that while you are many, he is but one. You have many hearts, many heads, many ears—he has but one heart, one head, one tongue. Your tastes, your attainments, are diversified. Each has his own want to be supplied, his own desire to be fulfilled, his own case to be spoken to. There is the man of feeling and the man of intellect, the superficial and the profound, the babe, the youth, and the man of age; there is the afflicted and the prosperous, the bowed down with sorrow, the lifted up with pride; there is the man whose last week's transactions and history have made him dejected and anxious, and the man whose transactions and history have made him buoyant and mirthful; there is the timid and the

daring; there is, if you will allow me the use of a certain classification—there is the nervous, the sanguine, the melancholic, and the phlegmatic. And, to add to the difficulty, one man seldom comes into the house of God twice in the same state of mind: what is admirable for its adaptation to-day, will quite miss the mark, so far as his feelings are concerned, to-morrow.

With these unnumbered diversities you come together, each one naturally seeking his own. But how can you have it? He is but one, and you are many. A little consideration would save congregations from much disappointment, and secure to them much profit. Let them come together, not each man craving the gratification of his particular taste, not thinking of his own things, but with an earnest purpose, formed and strengthened at the throne of grace, to hear the truth that may be spoken, to receive it and feed upon it. The lesson for the day may have no direct bearing on your particular case, but it may only do you the more good, by diverting your attention from your own sore and sorrow to some truth or some duty, the neglect of which is perhaps the occasion of feebleness, if not of disease. And thus, instead of getting always the one thing you like, you will have the many things you need.

Again, in your expectations of private attention, remember that he is one, while you are many. I know him too well to doubt that he will devote a due measure of time and strength to private pastoral labours. But, be not unreasonable in your demands—he is one, while you are many. The work to which your Junior Pastor is called is a great work. He is one—you are many. Let the sympathies and prayers of the many support the one. You have called him to discharge an arduous office, in which indeed he will have the counsel and sympathy of your long loved and tried Senior Pastor; but in which you, too, are bound in common honesty to rally around him and

support and encourage him. Standing in the forefront of the Church, as you go forth to your spiritual warfare, he will be the peculiar object of the malice and evil endeavours of your spiritual enemies. You have put him there; you have placed him in that position of peril and trial. not recreant to your chosen leader; stand by him, uphold his hands; throw around him the shield of your love and prayers, and let him not stumble or fall through lack of your sympathy and aid. Give to my dear brother your confiding affection, your unceasing prayers, your earnest co-operation, and you will make him-neither he nor you will misunderstand me when I say it-you will make him a better preacher and a better Pastor. And this day will be held in long and happy remembrance, as the beginning of a new and prosperous epoch in the history of this old and honoured Church.

THE LORD BLESS YOU AND KEEP YOU: THE LORD MAKE HIS FACE SHINE UPON YOU AND BE GRACIOUS UNTO YOU: THE LORD LIFT UP HIS COUNTENANCE UPON YOU AND GIVE YOU PEACE. AMEN AND AMEN.

R. CLAY, PRINTER, BREAD STREET HILL.

Α

SERMON

PREACHED IN

LAURA CHAPEL, BATH,

ON SUNDAY EVENING,

NOVEMBER THE FIFTH,

1848.

BY

EDWARD TOTTENHAM, B.D.,

PREBENDARY OF WELLS, AND MINISTER OF LAURA CHAPEL.

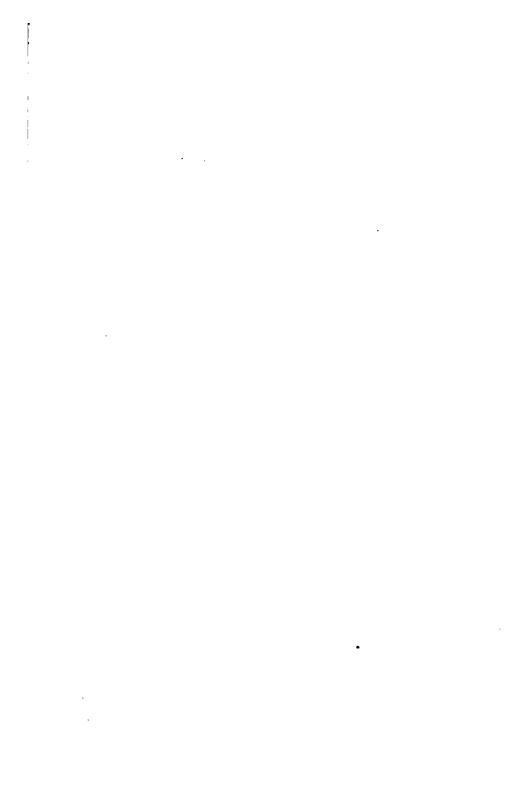
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The following Sermon is published in compliance with the strongly expressed wish of several who heard it. Though not written before delivery, it is hoped that it will prove substantially the same in its present state as when it was preached. In a few places, however, some additional ideas, which seemed advisable for the more complete elucidation of the subject, have been introduced.



SERMON.

esther ix. 27, 28.

"The Jews ordained, and took upon them, and upon their seed, and upon all such as joined themselves unto them, so as it should not fail, that they would keep these two days according to their writing, and according to their appointed time every year; and that these days should be remembered and kept throughout every generation, every family, every province, and every city; and that these days of Purim should not fail from among the Jews, nor the memorial of them perish from their seed."

THE events recorded in this book occurred subsequently to the Babylonish captivity; but how long after, or who the particular monarch was, according to the name he bears in profane history, that is here called Ahasuerus,* is involved in some degree of uncertainty.

The Babylonish dynasty, under which the Jews were carried captive to Babylon, had now tottered to its fall, and had been succeeded by that of the Medes and Persians; and although the return of the Jews to their own land had commenced, under the decree of Cyrus, yet very many of them were still dispersed throughout the more immediate provinces of the Persian empire.

In the reign of Ahasuerus, an individual named Haman was advanced to the highest dignity next the royal person. He was a man of unbounded ambition, of excessive pride, and of the most violent resentments. While "all the king's

^{*} Eath, i. 1. + Dan. v. 30, 31.

Esra i. 2. || Esth. iii. 1.

servants bowed and reverenced" him, Mordecai, the Jew, declined complying with the universal custom; and thereupon Haman, "full of wrath," and "scorning to lay hands on Mordecai alone," formed the cruel and barbarous design of destroying all the Jews in the kingdom of Ahasuerus.* By misrepresentation of the real character of that people, and by promises to enrich the royal treasury, Haman succeeded in obtaining the monarch's consent, and "letters were sent by post into all the king's provinces, to destroy, to kill, and to cause to perish, all Jews, both young and old, little children and women, in one day, even upon the thirteenth day of the month Adar, and to take the spoil of them for a prey."†

But man's extremity is God's opportunity. His providence works in a marvellous manner. Events which had previously occurred were now shown to be intimately connected with the frustration of this malevolent design, although at the time the secret working of the Divine purpose could be perceived by The king had, in a moment of displeasure, divorced and deposed his queen Vashti, ‡ and had subsequently married Esther, || the cousin of Mordecai, a Jewess by birth, who, however, according to the charge given her by her relative, had "not shown her kindred nor her people." When the decree of extermination went forth, "there was great mourning among the Jews," and Mordecai, afflicted like the rest, but hoping that the advancement of Esther might open a way for their deliverance, approached the king's gate "clothed with sackcloth," and solicited the queen to interpose for the rescue of her people. The laws of Persia rendered this an office of some peril, inasmuch as no one could safely go in unto the king without being called. Esther, therefore, hesitated at first; and there is something very striking in the manner in which Mordecai pleaded with her in the moment of her hesitation: - "Think not with thyself that thou shalt

[•] Esth. iii. 5, &c. + iii. 8-15. ‡ i. || ii.

escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews. For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"* On this remonstrance the queen yielded. She resolved to encounter the dangers of the proposed course. She cast herself on the religious devotions of her people; and seeking in her own person, too, the divine help, she "put on her royal apparel," and drew near to the king, when, to her infinite joy, the "golden sceptre was held out to her," and she was not only graciously received, but told that her request should be granted "even to the half of the kingdom."†

Not to dwell on various intervening details, the result was, that, after an alternation of joy and mortification to Hamanjoy, in being invited to a banquet with the king and queen, t little imagining the real purpose of the invitation; and mortification, in having, by the king's command, to bestow honour on Mordecail before the people for his proved loyalty, though he himself, at the suggestion of his wife, had previously prepared a gallows for his execution § —Haman himself. accused by the queen, was executed ¶-Esther and Mordecai were enriched and honoured—the decree for the extermination of the Jews was reversed, and they were granted the royal permission to rise and slay their enemies, and "to take the spoil of them for a prey."** According to this decree, they did put their enemies to death; but it is particularly said several times, "they laid not their hands on the spoil;"++ and the festival of Purim (so called from the lots to which Haman had had recoursett when he conceived his design against the Jews, the word Pur in Persian signifying a lot) was then instituted as a grateful memorial of the deliverance they had experienced. "Mordecai sent letters unto all the Jews, that

^{*} Eather iv. + v. ‡ v. || vi. § v. 14. ¶ vii. ** viii. ++ ix. ‡‡ iii. 7.

they should keep the fourteenth day of the month Adar, and the fifteenth day of the same, yearly, as the days wherein the Jews rested from their enemies, and the month which was turned unto them from sorrow to joy, and from mourning into a good day. Wherefore they called these days Purim, after the name of Pur: therefore, for all the words of this letter, and of that which they had seen concerning this matter, and which had come unto them, the Jews ordained, and took upon them, and upon their seed, and upon all such as joined themselves unto them, so as it should not fail, that they would keep these two days according to their writing, and according to their appointed time, every year; and that these days should be remembered and kept throughout every generation, every family, every province, and every city; and that these days of Purim should not fail from among the Jews, nor the memorial of them perish from their seed."*

I have thus given an outline of the history with which the text is connected, as the basis of those remarks which are naturally suggested on the present occasion. There are two events which we this day celebrate with thankfulness to Almighty God: the first, the frustrating of that "horrible and wicked enterprise, plotted and intended to have been executed against the king and the whole state of England, for the subversion of the government and religion established among us;"+ and the second, the arrival of King William III. "for the deliverance of our Church and nation from Popish tyranny and arbitrary power."+ It is my intention to confine myself entirely to the first of these, as being the original cause of the thanksgiving, and that for which the special service was in the first instance framed. And, in reference to this, the text may suggest for our contemplation, successively, THE FACT ITSELF, and THE MEMO-RIAL OF IT. May God the Holy Spirit enable us to enter on the consideration with candour, with faithfulness, and with charity.

Eather ix. 20—28.

⁺ Special Service for the day

- First.—The text, viewed in its connection with the previous history, may serve to remind us of THE FACT, not only of "THE DESTRUCTION INTENDED" against "the king and the three estates of the realm of England," in the reign of James I., but also of their "WONDERFUL AND MIGHTY DELIVERANCE."*
- I. And here let us observe, in the first place, THE POINTS OF RESEMBLANCE BETWEEN THE HISTORY OF THIS TRANSACTION AND THAT IN THE BOOK OF ESTHER. Of course, as in all such cases, the correspondence is only to a certain extent: there are particulars in which the resemblance fails. For instance, the king was a party to the design in one case, and not in the other. The one originated with the prime minister, the other with those who were opposed to the government. The object of the one was simply the destruction of an obnoxious people, that of the other the subversion of the government and religion of the state. But, notwithstanding this dissimilarity, there are, I think, some very remarkable points of coincidence.
- to pay homage to him—the plot of the conspirators in 1605 originated in the refusal of England to pay homage to Rome. Had Mordecai been content to join with the rest in "bowing and reverencing" the Persian minister, there is no reason to suppose the design of destroying his people would have been entertained; and had England been content to bow the neck to the Pope of Rome, and to acknowledge his authority and receive his dogmas, we never should have heard of this conspiracy in our national history. But it was eminently a religious movement. As England was originally independent of Rome, and had her own ancient British Church before Augustine and his monks landed at the close of the sixth century, and as, after that, she long resisted the encroachments of a foreign bishop, so at the Reformation she

^{*} Special Service for the day.

cast off the yoke which had, after many struggles, been imposed upon her: and the design of the conspirators was, to overthrow the Reformed Religion, and to aid in bringing back the nation to that state of subjection from which it had been thus emancipated. The history of Elizabeth's reign, with its numerous treasons and conspiracies, is proof that this object was kept steadily in view; and the proceedings in the reign of James were of the same character. We shall have to note more on this subject in the sequel.

- 2. It was, in both cases, a plot upon a grand scale. Haman "scorned to lay hands on Mordecai alone." His vengeance thirsted for something beyond this; and it would not have satisfied the views of the conspirators in our own country to cut off some few obnoxious persons, however influential. Even when, prior to the ripening of the plan, it was proposed to assassinate the king, the idea was rejected on the ground that it was not well to "adventure life for so small a purpose." No! the design was more gigantic. It embraced "the king and the three estates of the realm." It was to be a blow terrible in its nature, and momentous in its results.
- 3. The providence of God was remarkably displayed in the frustration of each. It was mere caprice of King Ahasuerus to divorce Vashti; and the selection of Esther out of a number of young women to be his queen, she being, moreover, probably the only Jewess among them, was not, in itself, an event of a probable nature. Yet all this was done, and on it hinged the entire confounding of Haman's enterprise. As Mordecai said to her, "Who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"*

 It was not the natural course of probable events—it was the direct interposition of Divine Providence. And may we not observe a similar interposition in our own case? as in one of the prayers of the service we say, "not our foresight, but

Thy providence delivered us."* Everything progressed favourably for the conspirators: success seemed to be the natural result of plans so long digested and so skilfully arranged. But, shortly before the meeting of Parliament, a mysterious letter was written by one whose name has never transpired, and whose object was, not to overthrow the plan, for the writer evidently approved of it, but to save the life of a Roman Catholic nobleman, by inducing him not to attend on the occasion. This letter, laid before the king and the privy council by the nobleman to whom it was addressed, excited attention by its mysteriousness, and led to enquiry and examination, which issued in the complete discomfiture of the atrocious design. Had the letter not been written, or had the individual to whom it was sent simply absented himself from Parliament without divulging its contents, or had it been treated by the privy council as undeserving of serious attention, as some were inclined to regard it, the probability is that the plot would have succeeded, and the awful catastrophe would have occurred. Shall we not, then, "adore the wisdom and justice of God's providence, which so timely interposed in our extreme danger, and disappointed all the designs of our enemies?"*

4. The two plans were both frustrated at the moment when they were ripe for execution. We are told that the sanction of the king was obtained to the destruction of the Jews—letters were sent by post into all the provinces, containing the royal ordinance—the preparations were all made—the day was fixed—the gallows erected for Mordecai's execution—and Haman, flushed with joy and expectation, went to the banquet; but it was at the moment when he thought all sure that his artfully-contrived scheme was baffled. The period which was, in his anticipation, to bring all to a successful issue, was the very time of his discomfiture. It was even so in regard to the conspirators. Their plot was not baffled, nor even discovered, till everything was ready.

[·] Service for the day.

It was arranged in the Spring of 1604, though it appears to have been conceived previously. The enterprise seemed to be favoured by the facility with which they were able to rent a house adjoining the House of Lords. Still the working of the mine in which the powder was to be deposited was a very slow and laborious operation, and required the greatest energy and perseverance, which, in their ardent zeal, they cheerfully gave. But afterwards this difficulty was removed by their being enabled to procure a coal-cellar which was exactly under the throne. powder was placed in the cellar, concealed by coals and wood, and nothing remained but to fire the train when the occasion arrived. The knowledge of the letter before-mentioned having been received, caused them, indeed, some misgivings for a time: they were at first alarmed, but finding, three or four days after, that the cellar was untouched, they thought the letter was disregarded, and that there was no ground for apprehension. The examination of the cellar by the authorities was postponed till the day before the meeting Thus everything seemed ripening for the execution of the plot-the conspirators waited only for the next day-everything necessary for the accomplishment of the design was at hand-when, just twelve hours before the assembling of parliament, a rigid search was made, and the whole treasonable conspiracy discovered and baffled. Even at the moment of highest expectation, the words of Scripture were verified—"He disappointeth the devices of the crafty, so that they cannot perform their enterprise."*

5. The plotted mischief recoiled on the respective authors. Not only was Haman's design disappointed, but he was "hanged on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai," while the Jews were rescued from destruction, and "had light, and gladness, and joy, and honour." + And how righteous the retribution in the case of the conspirators! After all their preparations, and amid all their hopes, they

^{*} Job v. 12. + Esth. viii, 16.

were utterly confounded. Flying from the pursuit of justice, except one who was seized in the cellar, ready to apply the match to the train, they were found in arms against their Sovereign; some were slain, the rest were captured, and, after trial, executed as traitors; while the Church and realm of England were, by God's mercy, saved from the ruin that threatened them. How applicable to the whole history the words of one of the Psalms appointed to be read in the service of the day-"They encourage themselves in an evil matter: they commune of laying of snares privily; they sav, They search out iniquities; they Who shall see them? accomplish a diligent search: both the inward thought of every one of them, and the heart, is deep. But God shall shoot at them with an arrow; suddenly shall they be wounded. So they shall make their own tongue to fall upon themselves: all that see them shall flee away. And all men shall fear, and shall declare the work of God: for they shall wisely consider of his doing."*

- II. Let me now refer to the methods by which it has been attempted to disconnect the Church of Rome from the guilt of this transaction.
- 1. Some have ventured to maintain that there was no plot at all, or that the whole matter was a contrivance of the Protestant Secretary of State, Cecil, Earl of Salisbury, to bring the Roman Catholics into disrepute. It seems almost trifling with the subject to dwell on such a point as this, but the boldness with which it has been asserted renders it expedient. That the king and his ministers had received some intelligence that a treasonable design was in contemplation appears to be certain; but of the particulars they knew nothing, much less were they parties to it for the purpose already mentioned. There are few facts in history more indisputably established than this powder plot, and its invention by adherents of the Church of Rome under the influence of the principles in which they had been educated.

The assertion that it was a contrivance of the secretary of state was not advanced till sixty years after the event. No one at the time questioned the reality of the conspiracy. The State Trials contain a detailed account of the whole proceedings-the discovery of the plot, the examination, trial, and conviction of the parties. In the Statute Book of the realm is to be found the act of parliament passed in the year 1606, enjoining the observance of the fifth of November, and proceeding on the assumption that it was a Romish device. Special Service appointed for the day also furnishes conclusive proof. Can we doubt the evidence of all these? we suppose the state trials had no existence, or that their details have been falsified? Can we imagine that the whole parliament of England conspired to invent a falsehood, and to support it by legislation, or that the act never passed into a law? Or is it to be conceived that our forefathers, both in Church and State (for the original service was sanctioned by both), should, in the solemn services of religion, knowingly assert the existence of a plot which never did exist, and offer up thanksgivings for a deliverance which never was experienced, thus not only being guilty of the grossest wickedness, but affirming what, if it were false, could not but be repudiated by the general verdict of the nation? If all this be imaginable -which it is not—we ought to be furnished with evidence of this excessive falsification, and injustice, and hypocrisy; but such has never been adduced. It has been said by some that the king's speech, at the opening of parliament, exonerated the Roman Catholics. The reverse is the case. He said, indeed, as we say, that it did "not follow that all professing the Romish religion were guilty" of that "desperate device," but he distinctly traced the whole treason to the Romish religion, which is the really important point. It is not with persons we have to do so much as with principles. None of the conspirators ever complained of being ensnared into the plot; on the contrary, their confessions and letters abundantly prove the falsehood of the allegation by which, through a grievous perversion of historical fact, it is thus attempted to evade the branding of Rome with the guilt of this transaction.

- 2. It is said by other apologists that it was only the act of a few desperate individuals, and that, even admitting the reality and the wickedness of it, none but themselves are involved in the guilt of the proceeding. Now this is not at all a correct description of the parties concerned. There was only one of them who did not move in the rank of a gentleman. Some of them were naturally amiable men, whose kindlier feelings were overborne by the principles in which they had been instructed. Though it might be said of one or two of them that they were daring adventurers, or desperate in character and circumstances, yet this was far from being the case with the majority. There were among them men of high family, great abilities, amiable dispositions, and considerable fortune. But it is not so much with their personal character or condition that we are concerned. It is with the principles by which they were actuated. It is with the sanction, direct or implied, which their proceedings received. It is with the connection between their religion and their practice; and to this we shall direct our attention in a subsequent part of this discourse.
- 3. We are told also that it was a Roman Catholic nobleman who discovered the conspiracy; and the inference drawn from this is, that members of the Church of Rome, as such, ought not to be implicated in the matter. But this is very inconclusive. We deny both the fact and the inference. We have already seen that some unknown person, privy to the plot, and approving of it, sent a letter to the nobleman in question, Lord Monteagle, simply with the design of saving his life. The writer did not communicate the nature of the danger, but warned this peer to absent himself on the opening of Parliament; and he, having received the mysterious communication, thought it advisable to lay it at once before the secretary of state. This, coupled with the vague information

which had been received of some intended treason, eventually led to the discovery. But it cannot be said that Lord Monteagle revealed the plot, for, in fact, he knew nothing about it; and even if he had done so, this would not affect the question under consideration. God forbid that we should say that all Roman Catholics approved of the diabolical design. Many, I doubt not, reprobated it then, as now. But this is not the point. The enquiry turns, not upon what certain individuals did who were not implicated in the transaction, and, probably, disapproved of it, but upon the connection between the religion and the conduct of those who were implicated. And this is precisely the ground taken by the king in his speech at the opening of parliament.

Secondly.—We may view the text, not only as reminding us of this fact, but also as suggesting a grateful MEMORIAL OF GOD'S MERCIFUL DELIVERANCE VOUCHSAFED TO US.

- I. The general bearing of the case recorded in the book of Esther is obvious.
- 1. We may consider it as affording a precedent worthy of imitation. Not that we are called on to follow, or that it would be right to do so, all the details connected with the feast of Purim. In the first celebration of that festival, though the Jews were to be commended for not flying on the spoil when they had the king's authority to do so, and though they thus proved their disinterestedness, yet they would have shown a more forbearing spirit if they had not taken advantage of the decree to slay their enemies. It may be that they did so only when they were attacked (for there seems some obscurity in the matter),* but if they, of their own accord, sought out their enemies and put them to death, it was a course which, without a warrant from Heaven, was greatly to be deprecated. Better for them, in the moment of their triumph, to have been contented with strengthening their own position, by procuring the enactment of laws

^{*} Compare Esth. viii. 11, ix. 2.5, &c.

which would have restrained their enemies from any future cruelties, for it is the very spirit of liberty and toleration to restrain from intolerance. In like manner, in the subsequent observance of the festival to this day, there is much that is objectionable. There is often great intemperance, and a spirit of revenge displayed, not merely in the record of Haman's cruelty, (which, for the exciting of their gratitude, might be well,) but in the curses they pronounce upon him. Viewing, then, the feast of Purim as a precedent for us, we are simply to take the grand and leading feature of a commemoration of deliverance experienced, and in this respect we find the practice accords not only with the reason of the case and the spirit of religion, but with the very mode in which God himself has spoken and ordained. Not only did individuals erect monuments or give names to places that God's gracious dealings might be had in remembrance—not only did the Church or nation ordain commemorative seasons, as in this case of Purim, and in that of the festival of the "dedication of the temple," which was instituted by Judas Maccabæus to commemorate the purifying of the temple from the pollutions of Antiochus Epiphanes-but the Almighty himself appointed the feast of the Passover, as "a memorial" and an "ordinance for ever," that the people of Israel might bear in their remembrance the gracious deliverance which He had wrought for them in Egypt. told also to "remember what Amalek did," and "what Balak king of Moab consulted, and what Balaam the son of Beor answered him from Chittim unto Gilgal;" and this, not to cherish in their bosoms feelings of hatred or ill-will towards their fellow-creatures, even though they were enemies, but that they might "know the righteousness of the Lord"that they might trace his hand, and adore the justice of his dealings, and be devoutly thankful for his mercies. We are, unhappily, so prone to forget "the loving-kindness of the Lord," that we require to be stimulated in our gratitude by repeated memorials of the past.

2. Accordingly, our Church and nation have deliberately established a memorial of that wonderful and gracious deliverance already spoken of. There was an act of parliament passed for the observance of the day, in which the merciful interposition of Divine Providence is gratefully recognised; and a special service of thanksgiving was drawn up by the bishops, and set forth by the authority of the Crown in 1606. This service, though without the direct sanction of Convocation, was duly read in the churches till the time of the Com-At the Restoration, when the Prayer-Book was again introduced, it was revised by the Convocation in 1661, and published, with the highest sanction of the Church, in 1662. Afterwards, when King William III. landed on the same day, it was thought well to commemorate both events in one service, and certain prayers and thanksgivings, composed by the bishops, were added by royal authority, though, from the peculiar temper of the times, they were not submitted to Convocation. As a whole, then, the present form has only the sanction of the Crown, but the original partsnamely, those that refer more particularly to the Gunpowder Treason—have the highest that can be pleaded, that of the Convocation of the Church.

It is possible that some persons may feel that certain portions of this service are needlessly severe, and I think it well, therefore, to say a few words in reference to this subject. Now it cannot be questioned that the facts stated, and the views of those facts embodied in the service, are strictly and accurately correct. There is no one expression descriptive of the crimes referred to, or of their authors, that does not convey a positive truth; for in very deed the plot was so flagitious and abominable as nearly to transcend belief—one of the most cruel, treacherous, and cowardly schemes of assassination that the wickedness of the human heart ever conceived. We can have no doubt, then, that the service does not overstep the bounds of truth; but, at the same time, it is certainly expressed in language not altogether such

as suits the milder taste of the present age. I have no love for unnecessarily harsh expressions, but, in canvassing this matter, we must remember the character of the times in which the service was first composed, when the same style, and much stronger, was almost invariably used by all persons, and on all sides of a question; and more especially should we remember that it was drawn up by those who were nearer than ourselves to the time of the tyranny and persecutions of the Church of Rome in this country, and who, in some degree, experimentally felt the terrible power they had to deal with. If the service needs apology, this is what I offer; but I think the conclusion to which we may fairly come as regards ourselves is this—that, while we might perhaps prefer that in some few parts of it (and they are but few) a milder phraseology should have been employed, without any of its real force being lost, there is, at the same time, on the ground already stated, no substantial objection to it as it stands. only, while in using it we declare our abhorrence of the crimes of popery, and thus warn ourselves and others against its machinations, endeavour to feel towards the victims of that system, many of whom may belong to it more in name than in reality, nothing but compassion, and charity, and good will.

II. But, more particularly, it may be advisable, beyond the general principle, to STATE MORE SPECIFICALLY THE REASONS FOR SUCH A COMMEMORATION AS THIS; for it is said by many that we are only reviving the recollection of matters which ought to be forgotten, and that it is uncharitable thus to bring to light, year after year, the deeds, however bad, of those who lived so long ago. Now if it were simply a case of personal injury, and one that did not involve higher considerations, I should at once, and most cordially, assent to this view of the matter. The forgiveness of injuries is one of the most prominent gospel precepts: there is a charity which "covereth the multitude of sins:" we are exhorted to be "kind and tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake,

hath forgiven us. But while we preserve, of course, the spirit of the foregoing passages, the present case must be viewed, at the same time, on other grounds.

In the first place, gratitude to God demands that such deliverances should be kept in mind. Nothing can free us from the obligation of this duty. Injuries may be forgotten, but mercies never should; and if the injuries committed be remembered, it is mainly that the recollection may call forth gratitude for the mercies experienced. It was for this end, as we have seen before, that God charged the Israelites to remember what the Amalekites and others did to them. It was not to foster a spirit of revenge or animosity, but to direct their thoughts continually to Him who caused them to triumph, and thus to induce confidence for the future as well as thankfulness for the past. "I will remember," says the Psalmist, "the works of the Lord; surely I will remember thy wonders of old. I will meditate also of all thy work, and talk of thy doings."* And it is recorded, to the shame and sin of Israel, that "they forgat God their Saviour, which had done great things in Egypt; wondrous things in the land of Ham, and terrible things by the Red Sea."+ In this case, therefore, it is meet that we should "consider how great things God hath done for us," +-- that we should "wisely consider of his doing." The more we trace the events, and contemplate the results which might have followed the success of this conspiracy, as well as the blessings which were preserved to us by its discomfiture, the more shall we find reason to keep God's gracious dealings in remembrance. The design was to overthrow the state and Church of England; to uproot, if possible, the Reformed faith, and to reduce us again to a state of vassalage to Rome. Everything was carefully planned for seizing the absent members of the royal family, in the event of the success of the plot, and for procuring succour from other quarters. It is not to be

doubted, from the whole course of events connected with this and other matters, that, if the conspiracy had succeeded, the Pope would have rejoiced at its success; and that the necessary supplies for the subjugation of England to the papal yoke would have been furnished by the Court of Rome, and by those States which were in alliance with the Papacy. How terrible the calamity which might thus have come upon our land! Not simply the destruction of those assembled in Parliament, calamitous as such an event would have been, but the re-establishment of the Romish religion, with all its direful effects upon the hopes, and happiness, and liberties of the country. But God, by the secret yet powerful working of His providence, ordered things differently: His grace and mercy interposed; and we, the descendants of those saved from impending destruction, are now in the enjoyment of all the blessings, both civil and religious, which have thus in so "marvellous a manner been preserved to us."* Is it not well, then, that the memory of these things should be revived for the magnifying of the name of God; and that, in the retrospect of the past as well as in the enjoyment of the present, we should unite, as a Church and nation, in the language of our service -" From this unnatural conspiracy, not our merit, but Thy mercy; not our foresight, but thy providence delivered us: and therefore not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy name be ascribed all honour and glory, in all churches of the saints, from generation to generation, through Jesus Christ our Lord."*

- 2. Another reason is, that the acts of the conspirators were but the natural result of principles inculcated, and practices sanctioned, in the Church of Rome. It is important to establish this at some length, because, in consequence of the Romish claim to immutability, it gives a peculiarly grave and instructive character to the whole matter.
- (1.) Let us then, first of all, briefly glance at the history of this country for some years antecedent to this treason. In

^{*} Special Service for the day.

the year 1570, Pope Pius V. issued his famous bull of excommunication against Queen Elizabeth. In this he boldly and unreservedly asserted the power of the bishop of Rome over all kingdoms, declared the queen to be deprived of all title to her dominions, absolved her subjects from their oath of allegiance, and interdicted them from obeying her commands. This doctrine promulgated by the papal see was the root of the numerous treasons and conspiracies that followed. a period of thirty years the queen was exposed to the machinations of those who wished to dethrone her, and to overthrow the Protestant religion. There was a constant succession of attempts on her life, and of instigations to rebellion both in England and Ireland. In these the Jesuits were more or less participators. The seminary priests, as they were called, came over from the Continent in order to enforce the bull of excommunication against the queen, and to excite Philip II., of Spain, was leagued with the Roman pontiffs in these disgraceful attempts, and the preparation of the Invincible Armada, which was so signally destroyed, was one of the results. The queen, however, preserved by an over-ruling Providence, at last died in peace, transmitting to her successor not only her crown, but the guardianship of the Protestant religion which has thus been so mercifully pro-But the active spirit of Rome was still at work. Before the death of Elizabeth there were other measures in contemplation; and certain bulls were issued by Pope Clement VIII. to prevent the accession of James I. These were to be kept secret till the death of the queen, and they were entrusted to Garnet, a Jesuit, by whom they were destroyed when it was found impossible to execute them, and dangerous to retain them in his possession. But it is quite evident that these bulls, shown by Garnet to some few of his party, had much to do with the subsequent conspiracy; for it was naturally argued that, if it were lawful to prevent the accession of James, it was equally so to remove him. And it is not less evident that the long course of treason against

Queen Elizabeth, beginning with the bull of Pius V., and so continually sustained by ecclesiastics and the highest authorities of Rome, could not but tend to convince any body of men, pursuing a similar object, that they were only acting out the recognized and authoritative principles of the church to which they belonged.

(2.) Furthermore, let us take notice of the conspirators themselves, and the views by which they were actuated. It is perfectly obvious that it was from first to last a religious question with them, and that they believed they were acting in conformity with the teaching of their church. They were bound together in their treasonable measures not merely by an oath of secrecy, but by a participation of the sacrament. Thus the solemn sanctions of religion were given to their enterprise. Fawkes, when apprehended in the cellar, acknowledged that he had been influenced by religious motives alone, and denied, at the same time, that the king was his lawful sovereign, inasmuch as he was a heretic. This was exactly in accordance with the declarations of the Papal bulls already mentioned. The confessions of the parties establish the same point: more particularly the letters of one of them, Sir Everard Digby. naturally a mild and amiable man, written during his imprisonment. In these he expressly declared that he did not think there was "the least sin in the plot"—that "zeal for God's religion" was his actuating motive-that he was persuaded "those best able to judge of the lawfulness of it had been acquainted with it, and given way to it"-and that he had "absolute belief that the matter in general was approved, though every particular was not known." How awful that his creed should have impressed him with such views as these! And what must be the character of a religion that produces such effects? Well might King James say, in his speech to Parliament, that it was "the blind superstition of their errors in religion that led them to this desperate Moreover, Jesuits were privy to the design. seemed to be no doubt of this at the time. The Act of Parliament for the observance of the day expressly mentions "Jesuits

and seminary priests conspiring most horribly." In the indictment the names of Garnet, Gerard, and Tesmond were specified, and they were charged with aiding in the conspiracy on the ground that the King was a heretic, and thereby accursed and excommunicated. The speeches for the Crown distinctly allege the connection of the Jesuits with the plot. If they did not originate it, they were, at all events, acquainted with the proceedings, and, instead of dissuading the parties concerned, they assisted them with their counsel and spiritual authority. Garnet, more especially, is identified with the history of this transaction; for the others escaped, but he was taken soon after and brought to trial, and executed as a traitor. These particulars may be sufficient so far as concerns the conspirators themselves.

(3.) But we must also observe what are the fixed and unrepealed principles of the Church of Rome bearing on this case. The deposing power of the Pope, and the persecution and extermination of heretics, are doctrines explicitly laid down by the highest authority, and never abrogated. decrees of general councils are absolutely binding in the Roman Catholic Church. Now the 3rd and 4th Lateran Councils, in 1179 and 1215, under Popes Alexander III. and Innnocent III., formally decreed the extermination of These decrees have never been repealed. contrary, the 4th Council of Lateran is expressly referred to as a general council, in the last that was held, that at Trent, A.D. 1545 to 1563; and in the concluding Article of the Creed of Pope Pius IV., the members of the Church of Rome profess to "receive unhesitatingly" all that has been "delivered, defined, and declared by the sacred canons and general coun-The Catechism of the Council of Trent plainly affirms that heretics and schismatics are in the power of the In the Canon Law, which Romish ecclesiastics swear to receive, it is asserted that the kingly power is subject to the pontifical—that the Pope has a right to depose sovereigns, to dispose of their kingdoms, and to absolve subjects from their oaths of allegiance—that all oaths to the prejudice of the Church of Rome are null and void-that Romish ecclesiastics may resist their sovereigns for the good of their In conformity with this the Popes have, church, &c. &c.. on numerous occasions, deposed and excommunicated sove-The persecuting and deposing power is directly asserted also in the Roman breviary on the festivals of Pius V. and Gregory VII.; and it is a circumstance worthy of notice that though, so far as the Roman Pontiffs are concerned, those services remain unchanged to this day, yet parts of them have at times been suppressed by the civil power even in Roman Catholics countries, on account of their being at variance with the safety of the state. Omitting other considerations, I would mention, as a further illustration, that, on the occasion of the election of a new Pope, after being attired in his pontifical robes, and placed on the high altar, and having received the homage of the cardinals, he is seated in the balcony in the portico of St. Peter's, and the mitre being removed from his head, and the tiara, or triple crown, being placed thereon, he is addressed in these words -"Receive the tiara with three crowns, and know that thou art the father of princes and of kings, THE RULER OF THE WORLD, on earth the vicar of our Saviour Jesus Christ, to whom be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen." This ceremonial, so far from being an antiquated thing, was gone through in 1846, at the accession of the present Pope; and the address being made to him when the mitre was removed, and the tiara put upon his head, demonstrates that there is to this day a claim to universal temporal dominion. though the advocates of Romanism in this country may affirm that such is not the spirit of the church, and may even say that it is a misrepresentation to charge her with inculcating persecuting principles or maintaining this power and authority of the Pope, yet, apart from the distinct and positive proofs to which I have referred, and which are much more conclusive than mere denials, I may add that the great theological writers of the Church of Rome-such as Bellarmine, Bailly,

Delahogue, Dens—treat these points as a branch of theological science, and assert the very same thing that I have asserted. Cardinal Bellarmine particularly affirms that such is the true doctrine taught by "all Catholics," though he intimates, as others do, that prudence must regulate the proceedings.

Putting, then, all these things together, I think we have a chain of evidence establishing the guilt of the Church of Rome in this transaction. If it be said that there was no direct sanction of the Church to this particular treason, that may be true in a certain sense; but when the papal bulls before-mentioned are taken into account, together with the persevering determination at Rome to get rid of the Protestant sovereigns of this country, and with them, if possible, of the Protestant religion—when the principles maintained in the Roman Church are remembered, and the fact that Romish ecclesiastics were identified with the proceedings-it must, I think, be considered that the sanction was strong enough, even though the details of the plot may not have received their imprimatur from Rome. If, again, it be affirmed that the case of the conspirators does not correspond to the doctrine of the Pope's deposing power, (for that was a power exercised by himself,) nor to the regulations respecting the extermination of heretics, (for they were to be handed over to the secular power,) and that, therefore, the connection I have endeavoured to establish between the principles of the Church and the proceedings of the men will not stand good-I reply that, when the doctrine of the Pope's deposing power was believed to be true, and that power known to have been exercised, so far as it could be, with reference to our own sovereigns, as well as to many foreign princes-when the parties knew that the Church had decreed the extermination of heretics, and acted upon that decree whenever she had the power and thought the exercise of it advisable—and when Romish ecclesiastics joined in the movement and gave the solemn sanctions of religion to it—it was not, I conceive, any very

great violation of the more regular method of proceeding, if, by another method, similar in spirit, though different in form, they desired to help forward the same consummation.

The connection is sufficiently close—the influence of recognized principles sufficiently apparent. Nor would the case have been singular, either in regard to the character of the transaction or its approval, in the event of success, by the Romish authorities. The awful tragedy of the massacre of St. Bartholomew, perpetrated in France in 1572, is one out of many in point. Did the Pope reprobate that atrocious deed, whereby thousands of French Protestants were slaughtered? No; he applauded the deed publicly-great rejoicings took place at Rome—there were solemn processions to the churches, and thanks offered to God for this great blessing—a special legate was sent by the Pope to the King of France to thank him for his zeal in the extirpation of heretics, and to encourage him to persevere in the work—a jubilee granted to all Christendom-and medals struck at Rome to commemorate the event, having on one side the effigy and name of the Pope, Gregory XIII., and on the reverse a representation of an angel slaving the heretics, with the inscription, "Slaughter of the Huguenots, 1572." And, arguing from such a case as this, there is no reasonable doubt that, though the Pope and the King of Spain congratulated James I. on his escape, it was, when we consider all that had been previously done, a piece of odious hypocrisy, and that they would both have rejoiced and approved of the plot if it had been successful.

Were the principles of Rome susceptible of change or improvement, we might not keep so tenacious a hold of past history; but it is the boast of Roman Catholics that their church is unchangeable. She is committed irrevocably to the principles she has once authoritatively sanctioned. She is, therefore, capable of the same deeds as ever, if she possessed the power, and thought it prudent to exercise it. And, in point of fact, so far she has had power she has exercised it, through her different instruments, even of late years. In

Roman Catholic countries the long-established principles of intolerance and persecution (though conveniently disclaimed in this country) have been acted on in our own day. Witness the expatriation of the Zillerthalers from the Austrian dominions, for their conscientious adoption of a faith different from Rome-the outrages in Madeira-the refusal of the Spanish Government to grant simple toleration to an English chapel at the Havannah—the position assumed by Romish bishops with respect to mixed marriages, as in Prussia and elsewhere—the severe measures adopted of late times, as of old, against the Waldenses-the refusal of religious liberty in so many Roman Catholic countries-these are all acts showing that the spirit is still there, and only waiting suitable opportunities to display itself. And we say, therefore, that, though the spirit of the age may in some degree keep these principles in check, though papal bulls are not now, practically speaking, invested with such terrors as belonged to them of old, and though the papal throne itself seems to totter amid the convulsions now shaking the kingdoms of Europe, yet there is amply enough to make it needful that we should remember what the Church of Rome. is, and that we should instruct and warn all men of her past history, her unrepealed principles, and her still strongly cherished hopes and aspirations.

3. And this naturally brings us to a third reason for such a commemoration as this—namely, the peculiar character of the present times. Not that I wish to exaggerate the circumstances of the days in which we live. In tracing the history of the Church of Christ from the first, and of the Church of England in particular, I cannot but see that seasons, dark and trying, have been again and again experienced—that events foreboding consequences the most disastrous have occurred—and yet that God, in his great mercy, has brought the Church, and the religion of which she was the guardian and teacher, safely through the struggle. Therefore, in looking at the character of the present times,

it is not with any feeling of despondency—far from it—but it is that we may be stirred up to faith and energy, to watchfulness and prayer. And the times are, my brethren, critical.

(1.) Consider, first, the movements of the Roman Catholics themselves in this country. For several years past they have been straining every nerve to advance their system. They have put forth astonishing vigour, and have prosecuted their plans with the utmost perseverance. They have erected chapels, and colleges, and nunneries throughout the kingdom; and though in many places, as I think it were not difficult to show, they have utterly failed of success, still they have an immense machinery at their command. Every possible engine is made use of to compass their designs. The most attractive and subtle advocates are studiously put forward. Every avenue whereby they may gain access is readily taken advantage of. The making converts is never lost sight of. Jesuits expelled, even from Roman Catholic countries, because of their intriguing and dangerous practices, land here in great numbers, and make the country that affords them an hospitable asylum the scene of their proselytizing labours. The principles of Romanism are carefully represented as mild, and moderate, and attractive, as if the honied accents of individuals seeking to advance their system were more conclusive than documents uncancelled and acts unrepented of. On the other hand, the statements of those who are not willing to judge of any church by what either friends or foes say, but by what the church herself promulgates, and who, consequently, are dogged enough to have recourse to decrees of councils, and bulls of popes, and authorized books of devotion (which, after all, is the only legitimate way of settling a doctrinal matter of fact), such statements are described, in the liberalism of the day, as antiquated notions, and the offspring of bigotry and uncharitableness. The worst of it is, that many persons calling themselves Protestants take this view of the matter, and appear in the not very consistent position of upholding an individual representation against a

documentary proof. All this favours the Romish movement. And now she takes some bold steps in advance. She consecrates her gorgeous cathedrals in the metropolis of England and elsewhere, with bishops from abroad attending the scene, and with ceremonies and sermons calculated to ensnare the unwary and the unstable. Nay, for the first time since the Reformation, the Pope of Rome has not been satisfied simply with appointing bishops for the Roman Catholics in England, but has constituted episcopal sees with titles derived from the territories of Queen Victoria. This is, I think, an act of intolerable assumption. Many other things, too, in their mode of advancing their cause, I look upon as highly reprehensible. But in regard to the general question of effort for the propagation of what they believe to be truth, in that I If, as I believe, they are propagating blame them not. grievous error, they are accountable to "God the judge of all:" but the principle of exertion for the cause of religion is praiseworthy, and I refer to it, not so much to cast reproach on them, as to stimulate you to zeal and activity.

We may also contemplate our gradual national appróximation to Rome of late years. I do not mean a feeling in favour of Romanism as a religious or political system, for, I believe, this great country is Protestant at heart, and that the expectations of the votaries of Rome will be grievously disappointed. But, still, there is much in our national acts calculated to favour their designs. We are desirous of more intimate relations with the Pope, as if he were a mere temporal sovereign, and not one who, by virtue of his spiritual office, claims, to this day, as we have seen, a temporal authority over all states. The titles of Romish prelates are officially acknowledged, and a system of precedence has been established whereby, in our colonies, bishops consecrated in our Church, and appointed to sees founded by the Queen of England in her own possessions, are made to rank after any individual in those colonies whom the Pope of Rome may please to nominate as an archbishop! The Government of this country, some time ago, decided upon establishing three provincial colleges in Ireland, which are now in course of erection. I do not enter upon the question as to the soundness or unsoundness of the principles on which they are founded. I merely speak of a matter of fact. The measure has given birth to a violent controversy within the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland—some considering them, in the main, as good institutions, and others, as nurseries of infidelity. Roman Catholic bishops have been ranged on both sides. The stability and success of the colleges is thereby. endangered. Now, what is the course pursued by the Government in this difficulty? Is it, assuming that the colleges are proper and needful, and bearing in mind that the principle on which they are founded is that they are open to all, Protestant as well as Roman Catholic, to go on with them as they have begun; or if, because of the prevailing divisions, their success be impracticable, to give them up of their own free accord? By no means. But a negotiation is opened with the Pope, through a Roman Catholic archbishop, submitting to him the amended statutes, and soliciting his favourable reception of them. The representative of the British Government, instead of acting independently of Rome, professes a "profound veneration for the character of the Pope," and places this country in the humiliating position of being a supplicant to him who claims to be the "ruler of the world, and the vicar of Jesus Christ." But the humiliation does not end here. Another Roman Catholic archbishop, of considerable notoriety, and who takes a different view of the subject, being in Rome, has succeeded in gaining over the Pope, so that, even in the face of our national petition, a formal condemnation of the colleges has been sent over recently. These are sad things. For years there has been a gradual concession to the principles of Rome. It is seen in the fostering of Romanism by national support in the colonies. It is seen in the manner in which the question of education is treated in Ireland. It is seen in the gratuitous endowment of the College of Maynooth. And now, if rumour speak truth, (and its correctness seems to be generally admitted,) we are to consummate our national patronage of a system we believe and declare to be false by a state endowment for the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland. If this were a mere political thing, I should not venture to refer to it; but it is a grave religious question, and who is to deal with such questions if not the national clergy, who are sworn to "banish all erroneous and strange doctrines contrary to God's word?" The advocates of such a measure, for the most part, do not, I firmly believe, support it from any attachment to Romanism as a religious system. Many, on the contrary, wholly repudiate its principles. But either, as with some, there is a lax indifferentism to all religion, or, as with others, the religious question is set aside, and the whole is settled on the ground of mere political expediency. They think it may work well as a political measure, and they do not feel a conviction that what is religiously or morally wrong cannot be politically Whether, even as a political measure, it would prove successful, may seriously be doubted, after the palpable failure of all measures of conciliation. Concession, though of course, in a certain sense, it is a proper thing, seems, in this instance, to make things worse rather than better. It emboldens to greater daring and more absolute assumption. It is regarded as a victory achieved, rather than as a benefit conferred. It binds not with links of love, but seems, in too many cases, to inspire with a more unmitigated hatred. Persons may, therefore, well question the political wisdom of the proposed course: they may foresee in it nothing but disappointment and failure. But we cannot deal with it merely in this light. If this were the view to be taken of it, we should not deal with it at all, at least in this place. We feel there is something more sacred in the question. We feel that to give national sanction to a religion which we have declared to be superstitious and idolatrous cannot but be displeasing in the eye of Heaven. To set our seal to all that the Articles of our Church and the oaths of our senators have affirmed respecting the Church of Rome, and then to give it the footing of an ecclesiastical establishment, seems an inconsistency of a most extraordinary character. To endow a system, and thus give it strength and stability, with which some of the most melancholy passages in our national history are identified, and which has worked for ill to the consciences and liberties of men wherever it has been invested with sufficient power, seems an act the most suicidal. It is not required on any principles of toleration. Toleration is one thing, patronage is another. To give free and full toleration to all is a Christian principle; to give direct support to falsehood is an anti-christian error. We desire freely to concede the former—we cannot but enter our solemn protest against the latter.

(3.) And there is yet another feature in the present times which renders it peculiarly expedient that the character of Romanism should be kept in mind-I mean, the course of events in regard to many amongst ourselves, who, first imbibing principles too nearly akin to Romanism, have at last apostatized to Rome itself. We have seen a system rise up amongst us, even within the bosom of our Protestant Church, which claimed at first to be peculiarly founded on Church principles, but which has gradually developed itself in naked and undisguised Popery. That Church principles, properly understood, should be explained, illustrated, and enforced, is only what is right and becoming in members of the Church. We cannot look upon these things with indifference, or assent to the theory that definite opinions upon such points are not of importance. But this is widely different from the mere affectation of a Church tone, while there is the reality of a Romish spirit. Is it not melancholy that persons solemnly set apart to the sacred ministry of our Church should have used their position and their influence to further the designs of Rome? that, while ministering in our sanctuaries, they should not only have introduced unwarranted novelties in the service, but, what is far worse than

mere ceremonies, should have affirmed some of the worst principles of Romanism, traduced the reformers and the Reformation, published catechisms and books of devotion, on the model and, in great measure, in the very words of Romish formularies, and openly avowed their longing desire for a reunion with Rome, and their profound admiration of her ser-It is with feeling of deep sorrow I speak of these The case is one which justly demands, I think, the severest reprehension, but that is not so much my province. It has been done by those who bear rule in the Church. I rather mourn over the movement, which, although incidentally it may have accomplished some good, has yet, I firmly believe, done more to strengthen Romanism in this country than anything that has happened for years. It has borne its bitter fruits. Let us hope the evil is in great measure checked, that men are returning to a sounder tone, that they have become more convinced of the vanity of giving themselves up to such "beggarly elements," and are fixing their thoughts more on the eternal and life-giving principles of the Christian faith. But though the evil may be checked, and though, after all, painful and distressing as the circumstances have been, the accessions to Rome have been but a few here and there out of multitudes cordially attached to our reformed faith, still there is abundant cause for watchfulness, and prayer, and effort. And when we add this consideration to what has been previously stated as to the character of the times in which we live, and consider, also, the debt of gratitude we owe to God for his gracious deliverances, and the still unaltered character of the principles from which, as we have shown, the powder treason sprang, I think we may fairly conclude that there are many reasons of a special character why, instead of forgetting, we should commemorate God's mercy, and "remember the marvellous works which he hath done."*

Let me now conclude with a few practical exhortations:-

^{1.} While you cultivate a wholesome dislike to the principles

^{*} Paalm cv. 5.

- of Romanism, exercise charity and forbearance towards those who are its adherents. We have before said that individual members of that Church may abhor such practices as we have spoken of, and even in regard to what they conscientiously believe, they deserve to be treated with kindness. We should always distinguish between principles and persons, and while we are firm and unyielding in regard to the one, we should be tender and compassionate in regard to the other. Nothing is gained by a spirit of acrimony—much is often lost. We must "in meekness instruct those that oppose themselves;" and this, properly understood, is quite consistent with the firmness of rebuke, and the decision of language that marks our reprobation of their errors. It is thus we become like the apostles of our Lord, and like our Lord himself.
- 2. Be humbled that you have so little profited by the privileges which a merciful God has secured to you. In the survey of God's dealings towards us, we may say, as was said of Israel, "What nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for?" And yet how great our shortcomings! how crying our national as well as our individual sins! how little have we "rendered unto the Lord for all his benefits!" how much have we lived in forgetfulness of Him! how indifferent have we been to the interests of His truth! "Where is boasting then? it is excluded." It becomes not such as we are. We need to cry, "God be merciful to us sinners." We need to humble ourselves in the dust, and, while confessing our iniquities, and mourning over our sins, to seek that pardon which is provided through the blood of Jesus, and that grace which alone can enable us to profit by the privileges we possess.
- 3. Cultivate unwavering attachment to the blessings imparted to you. If God has done so much for us, we should not be ourselves indifferent. With many their religion is a sort of infidel latitudinarianism. There is no thorough appreciation of the blessings of the Gospel. Let this not be so with

you. The things are worth holding fast and struggling for. "Watch ye then, stand fast in the faith, quit ye like men, be strong." "That which thou hast already hold fast till I come," are the words of the Great Head of the Church. Let nothing tempt you from the faith which God has revealed, and which has been handed down amid the fires of persecution and the blood of martyrs. It is your all. It is a precious deposit. In the maintenance of it you must meet with obstacles, and difficulties, and allurements, and, perhaps, be the victims of scorn and reproach. But never mind. Greater is He that is for you than all that be against you. The prize is worth contending for: if ye be "faithful unto death," ye shall "receive the crown of life."

4. Remember the responsibility that devolves upon you. Responsibility is always in proportion to privilege. under the clear light of the Gospel. The Bible is to you an open book. You are taught the true way of salvation, not by human merits, or satisfactions, or works, or unctions, but by the one sacrifice of Jesus Christ once offered-by the complete redemption that is in Him who, having "died for our sins, rose again for our justification," and, having ascended into heaven, now "ever liveth to make intercession" for his people. Amid all the advantages you enjoy-and they are manythis stands pre-eminent, that to you is made known the "only name by which we can be saved," and that, though in yourselves utterly lost and ruined as sinners, there is hope even for such-hope full and entire-through Him who has borne the penalty of the law, has stood in the room of the guilty, that He might atone for their sins, and bring in for them an "everlasting righteousness." Brethren, it is your privilege to have all this revealed to you; but remember it is also your If you despise or neglect these things, you responsibility. "treasure up wrath," and expose yourselves to the fearful condemnation that results, not merely from a violated law, but from a slighted redemption. See, then, that you have a personal and spiritual interest in "Christ the Hope of Glorv."

It is quite possible to protest against the errors of Romanism, and yet to be experimentally ignorant of the value and power of Protestant Christianity. There may be the "form of godliness" without "the power"—the zeal of the partizan, without the spirit of the Christian. Enquire, therefore, into your actual state. "Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith." And seek "now in the accepted time," and in "the day of salvation," a spiritual realization of those unspeakable blessings which the Gospel reveals.

Finally.-While you recognize God's hand, and are thankful for God's mercies, let the consideration of all that He has done for you lead you to more steadfast dependance and more earnest prayer. "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us;" let us raise then our Ebenezer of thanksgiving. He is "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." With Him is "no variableness, neither shadow of turning." Let us "trust then and not be afraid." Grateful for the past, let us confide in Him for the future, and fervently seek that blessing without which we cannot stand, and which He has promised to the prayer of faith. Everything around us seems to have received a shock. Nations are "reeling to and fro." Thrones and empires are trembling in the balance. spirit of anarchy and infidelity is abroad. Gross superstition and unblushing scepticism march onward for the accomplishment of their respective ends. There are portentous signs that indicate the coming struggle. The clouds are gathering, and we hear already the rolling of the distant thunder, and the approach of the storm. Let it be our comfort that though "clouds and darkness are round about" the Lord in many of the dispensations of His providence, yet "righteousness and judgment are the habitation of His throne." For ourselves then individually—for our church and nation and for the ultimate triumphs of the cross throughout the world-let our dependance be upon the Lord of Hosts, and let the thought cheer us amid the severity of the conflict, that. as God hath "delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver." we may "trust in Him that he will yet deliver us."

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APPENDIX.

- Page 1. "Ahasuerus." He is generally, I believe, supposed to have been Darius Hystaspes, the son-in-law of Cyrus the Great. This is maintained by the high authority of Archbishop Usher (Annals, p. 110), but other writers of eminence have endeavoured to identify him with succeeding monarchs. See Bishop Patrick on Esth. i. 1, and Calmet's Dictionary of the Bible, Art. Ahasuerus. The reason why I allude to the subject here, is in order to remark, for the connecting of the history, that, if the generally received opinion be correct, the events recorded in the book of Esther must come in chronologically about the period mentioned in the sixth chapter of Ezra.
- Page 5. "England originally independent of Rome." As this is a point of very considerable importance, I may refer to the following authorities out of many:—Bishop Stillingfleet's "Antiquities of the British Churches;" Dr. Hales on "The Origin and Purity of the Primitive Church of the British Isles;" Soames "Inquiry into the Doctrines of the Anglo-Saxon Church;" and a valuable pamphlet, containing a summary of the question, by the Rev. M. Foye, M.A. Seeley. With special reference to the Irish Church, it may be well, particularly at the present day, to mention that the same independence is clearly established in several valuable works of recent date. One is by Mr. Foye; another, of larger size, by Dean Murray. Also the "Primer of the Church History of Ireland," by Robert King, B.A.; with a smaller compendium, entitled "The little, Red Book of the Church History of Ireland."
- Page 10. I have said inadvertently that the original Service for November 5 was sanctioned by the Church and the State. More properly it should be by the Crown and the Convocation. The observance of the day was enjoined by Act of Parliament. I have explained myself more fully and accurately at p. 14. On this subject I may refer to a useful pamphlet by my friend the Rev. T. Lathbury, entitled "The Authority of the Services," usually called the State Services, which originally appeared in the Church of England Quarterly Review. Painter, London.
- Page 10. As I have so frequently alluded to King James's speech at the opening of Parliament, it may be desirable to insert here some extracts from it, as throwing light on the occurrences. "As for your part,

that are my faithful and loving subjects of all degrees, I know that your hearts are so burnt up with zeal in this errand, and your hands and feet so bent to concur in the execution thereof (for which as I need not spurn for, so can I not but praise you for the same) as it may very well be possible, that the zeal of your hearts shall make some of you in your speeches rashly to blame such as may be innocent of the attempt; but, upon the other part, I would have you consider that I would be sorry that any being innocent of this practice, either domestic or foreign, should receive blame or harm from the same. For, although it cannot be denied, that it was only the blind superstition of their errors in religion that led them to this desperate device, yet does it not follow that all professing the Romish religion were guilty of the same. For, as it is true no other sect of heretics did ever maintain that it was lawful or meritorious (as the Roman Catholics call it) to murder princes or people for quarrel of religion; and, although particular men of all professions of religion have been, some thieves, some murderers, some traitors, yet, when they came to their end and just punishment, they confessed their fault to be in their nature and not in their profession (these Roman Catholics only excepted); yet, it is true, on the other side, that many honest men, blinded, peradventure, with some opinions of Popery, as if they be not found in the question of the real presence, or in the number of the sacraments, or some such school questions ;- yet do they either not know, or, at least, not believe, all the true grounds of Popery, which is, indeed, the mystery of iniquity. And therefore do we justly confess that many Papists, especially our forefathers, laying their only trust upon Christ and his merits at their last breath, may be, and oftentimes are, saved. Detesting, in that point, and thinking the cruelty of Puritans worthy of fire, who will admit no salvation to any Papist, I therefore thus conclude this pointthat, as upon the one part, many honest men, seduced with some errors of Popery, may yet remain good and faithful subjects; so, upon the other part, none of those who truly know and believe the whole grounds and school conclusions of their doctrines, can ever prove good Christians or faithful subjects." Parliamentary History, 5th vol., p. 127. Ed. 1751. I take this from another source, not being able to refer to the Parliamentary History at this moment.

Page 13. Respecting the present celebration of the feast of Purim among the Jews, see Calmet's Dictionary. Art. "Pur."

Page 18. "The Bull of Pope Pius V." This was entitled "The Condemnation and Excommunication of Elisabeth, Queen of England, and her adherents, with an addition of other punishments." It is too long to give entire. In the beginning he asserts the authority of the Pope—"He that reigneth on high committed one holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church (out of which there is no salvation) to one alone upon earth, namely, to Peter,

the Prince of the Apostles, and to Peter's successor, the Bishop of Rome, to be governed in fulness of power. Him alone he made prince over all people and all kingdoms, to pluck up, destroy, scatter, consume, plant, and build, that he may contain the faithful that are knit together with the band of mutual charity, in the unity of the Spirit." He next alleges a variety of crimes as committed by Elizabeth against the holy see, and which, in fact, are all summed up in her favouring the Reformation, and refusing to submit to the Papal supremacy: and then proceeds-" We do, out of the fulness of our apostolic power, declare the aforesaid Elizabeth, being a heretic, and a favourer of heretics, and her adherents in the matters aforesaid, to have incurred the sentence of anathema, and to be cut off from the unity of the body of Christ. And, moreover, we do declare her to be deprived of her pretended title to the kingdom aforesaid, and of all dominion, dignity, and privilege whatevever. And also the nobility, subjects, and people of the said kingdom, and all others who have in any sort sworn unto her, to be for ever absolved from any such oath, and all manner of duty, of dominion. of allegiance, and obedience. And we do command and interdict all and every the noblemen, subjects, people, and others aforesaid, that they presume not to obey her, or her monitions, mandates, and laws." Bullarium Romanum, Romæ, 1638, tom. 2, p. 229.

Page 19. Letters of Sir E. Digby. See a brief but interesting account of these letters, with several extracts from them, in Mr. Lathbury's valuable work "Guy Fawkes, or the Gunpowder Treason."—Parker, London. I refer my readers to the same book for the more minute details of the conspiracy, and particularly with respect to the case of Garnet, the Jesuit, which I have not had time to enlarge upon. His equivocations, the proofs of his being identified with the plot, the alleged miracle of the straw, and the manner in which his memory has been regarded in the Church of Rome, are all illustrated at some length.

Page 20. The following is an extract from the 3d Canon of the 4th Council of Lateran:—" Let the secular powers, whatever offices they may discharge, be admonished and induced, and, if need be, compelled by ecclesiastical censure, that, as they desire to be reputed and accounted faithful, so, for the defence of the faith, they publicly set forth on oath that, to the utmost of their power, they will bonk fide strive to exterminate from the lands subject to their jurisdiction all heretics pointed out by the Church....... But if any temporal lord, being required and admonished by the Church, shall neglect to cleanse his country of this heretical filth, let him be bound with the chain of excommunication by the Metropolitan and the other coprovincial Bishops. And if he shall scorn to make satisfaction within a year, let this be signified to the Supreme Pontiff; that, thenceforth, he may declare his vassule to be absolved from their fidelity to him, and may expose his land to be occupied by Catholics, who, the heretics being exterminated.

may, without contradiction, possess it, and preserve it in the purity of the faith: saving the right of the chief lord, so long as he himself presents no obstacle, and offers no hindrance in this matter; the same law, nevertheless, being observed concerning those who have not lords in chief. But let the Catholics, who, having taken the sign of the cross, have girded themselves for the extermination of heretics, enjoy the same indulgence, and be armed with the same holy privilege, as is conceded to those who go to the assistance of the Holy Land." Lab. and Cos. Concil. tom. 11. p. 147—51. The decree of the third Council is to be found in tom. 10, p. 1522—23.

Page 20. The fourth Council of Lateran recognized as a general Council in the Council of Trent. Sess. xxiv., cap. 5. The statement of the Catechism of the Council of Trent on the power of the Church over heretics, will be found in Par. 1, Art. 9, Sec. 12.

Page 20, 21. Respecting all that I have said in these pages about the Canon Law, the Breviary Services, the Coronation of the Pope, &c., it will be sufficient, instead of giving all the references at length, to refer to a valuable work of Dr. Wordsworth, entitled, "Letters on the Destructive Character of the Church of Rome, both in Religion and Policy." London, Rivingtons, 1847. He gives proofs on all these points.

Page 21, 22. Bellarmine, Bailly, &c. See Bailly, vol.i., p. 179. Delahogue, Tract. de Eccles. p. 404. Bellarm. de Laicis, lib. 3, c. 21. Nothing can be more distinct than the statements of Bellarmine. He enters into an elaborate argument in favour of persecution—meets the objections to it—asserts that "all Catholics" maintain it(sect. 2)—and says expressly that the exercise of it is to be decided on the grounds of ability or prudence. A number of quotations, extracted by myself from the before-mentioned works, are contained in a "Speech delivered at Bath on the occasion of petitioning against the endowment of Maynooth College." Pocock, 1845. The teaching of Dens is notorious.

Page 23. On the massacre of St. Bartholomew, I may refer to the work with that title by Sir W. S. R. Cockburn, Bart., M.A. London: Parker, 1840.

Page 24. The facts briefly noticed in this page respecting the Ziller-thalers, &c., may be seen detailed at length, with the authorities, in a Lecture delivered by me, entitled "Popery on the Continent in the Nineteenth Century." London: Jackson, Islington Green.

Page 26. Establishment of Episcopal Sees by the Pope. My authority for this is simply what has appeared in the public papers.

Page 26, 27. With respect to the system of precedence in the Colonies, this statement is founded on Lord Grey's letter to the Colonial

authorities, which appeared in the newspapers, directing that the Roman Catholic Archbishops and Bishops should be respectively addressed as "His Grace," and "His Lordship." The effect of this, in regard to our Bishops in the Colonies (for we have no Archbishops), must be what I have stated. Respecting the Irish Colleges, the statement rests on Lord Clarendon's letter to Archbishop Murray, and the Papal rescript with Archbishop M'Hale's letter, all of which were also recently published in the papers.

M. E. CARRINGTON, PRINTER, BATH.

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GUNPOWDER TREASON.

A

FAREWELL SERMON,

PREACHED IN THE

PARISH CHURCH AT CAMBERWELL,

ON SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 5tm, 1848.

BY

THE REV. GEORGE FYLER TOWNSES

VICAR OF BRANTINGHAM, .

AND CHAPLAIN TO THE LORD BISHOP OF TASMANIA.

LONDON:

FRANCIS AND JOHN RIVINGTON, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD; AND WATERLOO-PLACE, PALL-MALL.

1848.

London:
Printed by STEWART and MURRAY,
Old Bailey.

TO THE

PARISHIONERS OF CAMBERWELL,

This Sermon,

(PRINTED AT THEIR REQUEST,)

IS DEDICATED,

WITH ALL RESPECT AND AFFECTION,

BY THEIR FAITHFUL FRIEND AND PASTOR,

GEORGE FYLER TOWNSEND.

Camberwell, Nov. 10th, 1848.

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FAREWELL SERMON,

đo., đc.

Acrs xx. 25, 26, 27. 32.

25. And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more.—26. Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men.—27. For I have not ahunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.—32. And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.

THESE words, my brethren, were spoken by the great Apostle of the Gentiles, as a farewell exhortation to the Christians of Ephesus. It appears from the 10th verse of the preceding (the 19th) chapter, that St. Paul had continued to dwell at Ephesus for the space of two years: disputing and persuading during that time the things concerning the Kingdom of God. He thence crossed the Mediterranean Sea and came into Europe, visiting the countries of Macedonia and Achaia. After twelve months spent in these countries, the Apostle is directed to return to Jerusalem. He is anxious. on his way back, to pay another visit to his converts at Ephesus. This city, however, being at a little distance from the sea coast, he was unable to accomplish his wish; and, therefore, he sends a message from Miletus, and invites to his presence the Elders of the Church of Ephesus. When they were come to him, he relates to them his labours and ministrations among them, the dangers endured in their behalf, and the doctrines he had preached among them, "testifying repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ." He then declares, in the words of the text, his conviction, that they would see his face no more; he takes

them to record that he is pure from blood-guiltiness towards them, and commends them to God and to the Word of His grace. The account of this interesting interview concludes with the expression of the sorrow of the Ephesians at the departure of the Apostle. For "when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down, and prayed with them all. And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck, and kissed him, sorrowing most of all, for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more. And they accompanied him to the ship." This passage of sacred Scripture appeared to me to be a not unsuitable subject for the circumstances under which we meet together this day. I conclude, my brethren, as you are all aware, on this day, my ministrations among you. Having addressed you from this place for the space of two years, I speak to you as your minister for the last time this morning. I might, indeed, after the example of the Apostle, recount to you the chief events of my ministry among you; I might relate how, in a moment, the full care and responsibility of this portion of our parish most unexpectedly devolved on myself and my colleague; how, amidst many fears and hindrances, I applied myself to the organising and carrying forward, as at present conducted, our public services; how, as opportunity offered, I directed the attention of this congregation to the great duty of missionary exertion incumbent on the Christian; how, I have endeavoured by avoiding every extreme, to let my moderation be known unto all men. I might proceed further upon this subject, but I forbear to do so; for I remember, that we have been called upon in our public services to celebrate a great event in our national history; and this event has a better claim upon your attention than any circumstance of a more personal character. is my intention, then, under the Divine blessing, to consider with you the event which we more particularly are called upon to commemorate on this occasion; and to conclude my discourse by taking you to record this day, that "I am pure from the blood of all men;" in that I have not shunned during the period of my ministrations among you, to declare unto vou "the whole counsel of God."

I shall endeavour to give you as shortly, and as simply as I can, a history of what is commonly called "the Gunpowder Plot." You will be all aware that about three centuries ago there was a great change or reformation made in the religion of this country. The Christian Religion, as now practised

and believed in by the nations on the Continent, who pay obedience to the Bishop of Rome, was, at the time of Henry VIII., received in this kingdom. During his reign, through the invention of the printing press, a great advance was made in learning and knowledge throughout the civilized nations of the earth. By the same means (the printing press), the copies of the Holy Scriptures became multiplied in this country; and when the king, and nobles, and prelates of this land were acquainted with its truths, they found many things in their religion opposed to, and contradicted by, the teaching of this Holy Word. On discovering this to be the case, the Church of England, and the State of England, the priesthood of England, and the laity of England, effected a great change or reformation in their religion. They did not, it is to be observed, make a new religion. They retained every truth of their religion, every article of their creed, every part of their liturgy, every portion of their ecclesiastical polity, then existing; so long as it was not forbidden by, nor was repugnant to, the Word of God.

Let me explain, by an example, what I mean. Take our present Prayer Book. This existed for the most part, as it is now, before the Reformation. The same collects and prayers, the epistles and gospels which we now use, were also used by our ancestors before the Reformation. They had, however, many Prayers to Saints, many supplications to the Virgin, many adorations and bowings to the consecrated elements in the Lord's Supper, many commands to buy masses for the dead, and indulgences for the living, which are now utterly omitted and discarded. These alter-

ations did not constitute a new religion.

Let me also make this plain to you. Picture to your-selves any person whom you well know, to be blooming with health; the life-blood's active flow mantling in his cheeks, and the strength of manhood visible in every member of his body. Suppose such an one to become, through the power of disease, weak, and sickly, and emaciated; his cheeks to be shrunken by illness, and his limbs to lose their vigour. Yet further imagine your friend to be again restored to you, his form to re-assume its manliness, his every limb re-invigorated and refreshed, again to perform its office; would you call your friend a new, or consider him a different person? You would know him to be one and the same man. He is healthy, and was sick; he was sick, and is now healthy.

Or again, if any of you have a garden, with its trim beds, and tidy walks, showing the attention you bestow on it If you neglect that garden, thorns and thistles will soon overrun your walks, and destroy your flowers. Should you again cultivate your plot of ground, restore its order, and remove its weeds, you do not tell your neighbours, who congratulate you on the completion of your task, that you have a new garden; but that you have re-made, re-newed, and re-formed it. So it was at the Reformation. There was no new religion. The Church of England was healthy in declaring the truths of the Scriptures, in preaching the religion of Christ, in maintaining the doctrines of the Apostles. The Church of England became sick in holding the traditions of men, in propagating Popish legends, in withholding the Word of God. The Church of England at the Reformation became, as the garden re-made. She was restored to her former purity, refreshed with her early piety. She taught no new 1 truths, but re-established, in greater conformity with the Scriptures, that religion for which, centuries before, many of her earlier sons had witnessed a good confession with their blood.

Neither was there, my brethren, any change at this time in the persons who composed the Church of England. I

particularly beg you to observe this point.

The property of the Church did not change hands. It was not taken from one set of men, and given to another. The fact was this:—The men who held the property still continued to hold it. There was no change in the men, but in the opinions. The King and Laity in their Parliament, the Bishops and Clergy in their Convocation, consented to receive the new Prayer-Book. They agreed to omit the things altered by the Reformation. There was some murmuring and discontent, but no schism, made in the Church, at the time of Henry VIII. The whole Church and realm acquiesced in his arrangements.

So, also, it was under Elizabeth. The whole hierarchy and commonalty of the land accepted the reformed Prayer-Book of

^{1 &}quot;Be it known, therefore, to all the world, that our Church is only reformed or repaired, not made new. There is not one stone of a new foundation laid by us; yea, the old walls stand still; only the overcasting those ancient stones with the untempered mortar of new inventions displeaseth us. Plainly set aside the corraptions, and the Church is the same."—BISHOP HALL'S WORKS, Vol. ix. p. 315

Queen Elizabeth.¹ It is a well authenticated historical fact, that every one, however great his attachment to the old system, did frequent the churches, and did conform to the reformed ritual of the Church of England, for the first eleven years of Queen Elizabeth's reign. It is, I repeat, a well-known fact, that every denizen of England, during the first eleven years of this Queen, did alone worship in this country

according to the ritual of the Church of England.

At this date it was, that the then Bishop of Rome, for the first time, published a Bull, condemnatory of the Reformation of Elizabeth; and at this date, in consequence of this Bull, those who retained more affection for the Pope than for the alterations then permanently established in the Church of England, seceded from her pale, renounced her communion, and first commenced that community of Christians in this country, who acknowledge the authority of the Bishop of Rome in preference to the Bishops of the National Church, within which the providence of God has placed them.

This Bull of the Bishop of Rome, issued at this time, gave rise to the Plot from which we celebrate this day, the deliver-

ance of our nation.

The party which acknowledged at this time the authority of the Pope, was powerful by their numbers, and by their union, and by the aid imparted to their plans by the avowed sympathy of all the nations then exercising political influence in Europe. The Romanists were constantly engaged, during the lifetime of Elizabeth, in treasonable plots and serious conspiracies against her crown, with a view to place a sovereign on the throne who should re-attach the English Church to These plots were all discovered and repelled; and the Pope. when James I. peacefully ascended the throne of this country. and in his numerous family gave a guarantee to the nation of a settled succession, then this party contrived the Plot on this day remembered, to destroy the three estates of the realm, in the hope that, in the confusion which would ensue, they might obtain the object of their machinations in the appointment of a Popish Sovereign to the throne.

I know, indeed, my friends, that it is the fashion of a cer-

¹ Queen Elizabeth, in her instructions to Sir F. Walsingham, her ambassador to France, dated August 11, 1570, speaking of the leading Romanists, says, "They did ordinarily resort from the beginning of her reign, in all open places, to the Churches, and to divine service in the Church, without any contradiction or show of misliking."

tain party among us, in the present day, to deny the existence of this Plot, and to ridicule its annual commemoration; but I am sorry to say that, after a most careful investigation of the evidences by which it is supported, I must express my full conviction of its truth. It is supported by every evidence which can be looked for in testimony and corroboration of any great national event. The letters of those who planned the plot; the avowals of the actors themselves, who executed it; the confessions of others, who, in expectation of its success, were prepared to rise in insurrection at a distant part of the country; the fact that, at the very time, a national custom, commemorative of the event (I allude to the custom of searching the vaults, by the officers of the House, on every meeting of a new Parliament), was commenced, and has continued ever since. All these circumstances afford such an abundant testimony to the fact of this Plot being planned, and nearly carried out, that I, for one, am compelled to give my credence to it. Neither, indeed, can I, in connection with this subject, forget that history brings the testimony of her verdict in corroboration of the possibility of this deed of guilt. the Church which, in other lands, through a mistaken zeal for religion, and in furtherance of political views, could plan the horrors of the Sicilian Vespers, and the cold-blooded carnage of the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, would not hesitate (I must believe) to remove, by one stroke, the Government of a nation which had opposed its plan, and renounced its authority. Impressed with these sentiments, I, for one, must continue my commemoration of this day; and assist, as opportunity may allow, in calling on my countrymen to be grateful in the recollection of the mercies as on this day awarded to their country.

It is not, my brethren, my usual custom to make direct allusion from this place to the opinions of other religionists living with us in this island. I am content generally to set before you "the whole counsel of God," as attested by the teachings of the Church of which you are members, and in which I am called upon to minister. But on the present occasion, I purpose to depart from the rule which I had laid down during the time of my ministering among you, for my adoption. When, indeed, I consider the strange circumstance of the day in which we live—that men, who have lived in the full light and knowledge of the open Scriptures—that men, who have had, or who ought to have had, by their position as

authorized teachers, the power to give a reason for the hope that was in them—that these men have been guilty of the grievous sin of apostacy, that they have deserted a Church which giveth the living oracles of God, for a Church that teacheth lying fables: when I consider this strange circumstance, the peculiar characteristic of the day in which we live, I think that I should not be doing my duty, whether as preaching before you on this day, or as speaking to you a farewell exhortation, if I did not at this time make some allusion to the opinions of those, from whose machinations three centuries ago, we now commemorate our deliverance.

I purpose, then, to give you a general test, an universal rule, by which you may distinguish the certainty of Christian and Catholic truth; and then, to consider briefly, some particular errors adopted and maintained by the authority of the

Bishop of Rome.

There is then a general rule, an universal test, by which we may establish the certainty of Christian truth against the conflicting teachings of Churches, or the multiform variations of human opinion. All matters of faith and practice, may in the first place, be referred "to the law and to the testimony." Everything that cannot be found in the Scriptures or proved thereby, may be rejected. all will consent. But this test will not be sufficient; for when the Scriptures seem to oppose each other, when human interpretations clash, and each claims the sacred text, as authorising his individual version, then, what general rule can be established for the end of controversy? Now, here, my brethren, I boldly avow that that rule, and that test, adopted by the Church of England, will be sufficient for this purpose, and that (when accepted) it does and will establish the certainty of Christian and Catholic faith.

The Church of England takes the Scriptures as the main foundation of all her teaching, and at the same time enjoins on her ministers the necessity of preaching nothing that was not held nor maintained by the first four General Councils of the Christian Church. Here, then, we obtain a test by which to secure the certainty of Christian or Catholic truth. "That is true which was first, that is false and adulterate which is later." The first four Councils were large Ecclesiastical Assemblies, composed of Bishops from every part of the world; from the East and West, from Africa, and Asia, and Europe. Of these men each knew what was the teaching of his own

Church; and the aggregate teaching of these Churches, the sameness of doctrines universally held by them all, were expressed in Creeds, drawn up in Councils, and promulged in Canons. These are yet extant. These, consistent themselves with the Scriptures, formed in early times the summaries of the Christian faith, the tests of admission to Catholic fellowship and communion. These still, with the Holy Scriptures, form the test or rule by which to judge the certainty of Christian faith - and that Church, which refers all her teachings to the sacred Scriptures,1 to the assertions of the Creeds, and to the decrees of the first four General Councils, 3 secures to her people the blessings of a Scriptural faith, of a

Catholic creed, and of an authoritative Teaching.

To this test we are content to refer all the matters of controversy between us and the Church of Rome. As far, indeed, as the Church of Rome teaches Catholic doctrine, as far as she teaches doctrines sanctioned by the Scriptures, by the early Creeds, and by the first four General Councils, so far do we agree with her: when she departs from this teaching, and asserts her peculiar errors, in opposition to the generally received faith of the first four centuries, then do we depart from her, and protest against her. We take our stand against her on the twofold ground that the errors maintained by her are opposed by the Scriptures, by the Three Creeds, and by the concurrent teaching of the first four Christian Councils. This was the principle acknowledged by Bishop Jewell, when he stood at Paul's Cross, and, in the presence of the assembled citizens of London, gave his public challenge: 4 "That if any one peculiar tenet of the Romish Church could be proved to have been held in the first six centuries, he would forego the reformed religion, and join his countrymen in their continued allegiance to the Pope." This was the conviction which led

March 11th, 1560. - Cf. ISAACSON'S LIFE OF JEWELL, p. 44.

³ Cf. VIII Article. ¹ Cf. VI Article.

³ Cf. Hooker's Eccles. Polity, Book viii. c. ii. sec. 18.—"Wherefore not without good consideration the very law itself hath provided, 'That Judges Ecclestastical shall not adjudge for heresy anything but that which heretofore hath been so adjudged by the authority of the Canonical Scriptures, or by the first four General Councils.' These were the words of an Act of Parliament, in first year of Elizabeth." The Canons of Archbishop Parker, 1571, give the same directions to Preachers. Concionatores. "Inprimis vero videbunt, ne quid unquam doceant pro concione, nisi quod consertaneum sit doctrinse Veteris aut Novi Testamenti, quodque ex illà ipsa doctrina catholici Patres, et veteres episcopi collegerint."— CARDWELL'S SYNODALIA, Vol. I. p. 126.

4 In a sermon preached at St. Paul's Cross, on the Sunday before Easter,

Bishop Hall, the great defender of the Church of England in the time of Charles I., to exclaim, "It is a free challenge betwixt us: let the elder have us both. If there be any point of our religion younger than the Patriarchs and Prophets, Christ and his Apostles, the Fathers and Doctors of the Primitive Church, let it be accursed and condemned for an upstart."

Thus, my brethren, borne out by the sanction of these eminent Reformers, do I confidently submit to you the authority of the Scriptures, the teaching of the Creeds, and the concurrent testimony of the first four Councils, as a general test, and as an universal rule; by which you may be assured of the certainty, that in the Prayer-Book of the Church of England you are instructed in the doctrine of Christ, in the faith of the Apostles, and in the Creed of the early Church.

We will now consider, briefly, some particular errors adopted and maintained by the Church of Rome, and contrast them with the declaration of the Scriptures, and with the teachings of the universal Church of the first four centuries.

The Church of Rome holds, as the keystone of the fabric of her ecclesiastical system, and as the source of her claim to the allegiance of every Christian man, the Supremacy of Saint Peter. She declares that to Peter did our Divine Lord delegate the supreme authority over his Church, so that to the shrine of Saint Peter every Church and every Christian should bow in homage and obedience. What say the Scriptures? They reveal no peculiar commission given to Saint Peter. The charge for the care of Christ's Church given to him, was given likewise to all the Apostles. The power of binding and of loosing was conferred equally upon all. Paul withstood Peter to the face, "because he was to be blamed." What say the records of the early They make no mention whatever of the supe-Church? riority of Saint Peter. The Bishop of Rome had no preeminence nor authority whatever, either by himself or by his representatives in the first four General Councils. reject the supremacy of Saint Peter, because this claim sets up a visible head at Rome, instead of at Jerusalem, restores the Israelitish policy, and militates against that great feature of the Christian Dispensation, which makes each National Church, a separate and distinct institution, governed by its

¹ Bp. Hall's Works, 8vo., vol. ix., p. 4.

own rulers, and acknowledging fealty to none other but the one great Head of the Church, now ascended into the Heavens.

The Church of Rome not only breaks through the discipline, established by Christ, for the government of His Church, but also corrupts the doctrines of the Scriptures. The two great truths of the Christian Revelation are these "that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin," and that "there is one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus." The Church of Rome still sanctions indulgences, by which a remission of a portion of the punishment entailed on sin is obtained, on the saying of certain prayers; and still bestows, not on the Son, but on the

Mother, the chief office of Mediation.

The charge of worshipping the Virgin Mary is sought to be glossed over, or explained away by some of those who have lately apostatized to the Romish Creed. But this charge cannot be escaped from. No created being is worthy to receive the supplications of men; nor can claim to exercise authority over the elements. And when in the Romanist books of devotions, I find prayers addressed to the Virgin, that, through her advocacy with Jesus, sin may be pardoned, and evils be averted—when I find her addressed as "the Queen of Heaven; as the Ruler of the Stars; as the averter of pestilence;" which expressions involve the possession by her of the attributes of the Almighty-when yet further I enter Romish churches, and find (as I have lately done) the Virgin represented as Herself trampling on the serpent's head, as encircled with the crown of mediation, and as invested with the sceptre of dominion; and when in addition to all this, I find crowds of worshippers kneeling before this crowned image of the Mother of my Lord, oh! then I call to mind the solemn commandment of the Most High, "Thou shalt not make any graven image, nor the likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath," and I hesitate not to speak of that system as idolatrous, which allows even the semblance of divine homage to be paid to the creature, and which, in awarding the Blessed Virgin emblems of potential authority equal with her Son, dims the brilliancy of that blessed truth: "There is one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus."

I might, indeed, my brethren, if time would permit, point out to you other peculiar doctrines of the Church of Rome,

and show you how each and all are alike condemned by the united testimony of the early Church, and of the plain declarations of the Word of God.

But I cannot believe it to be necessary to place any lengthened exposure of these errors before the members of this congregation. Ye have not, indeed, so learned Christ. Ye have ever had declared to you "the whole counsel of God." Ye have been taught to know the corruption of our fallen nature as the ground of your need of a Saviour. Ye have had Christ constantly pointed out to you in all his offices—as born holy, and living holy, and yet paying the penalty of disobedience, and becoming thereby the chastisement for our Ye have had Christ set before you as the risen Saviour, as rising in our nature, and ascending in that nature into heaven, that He might continue by the work of His intercession, the efficacy of the atonement He came to accom-Ye have had the Holy Ghost constantly placed before you as the sole agent of converting, renewing, and sanctifying the soul of the believer. Ye have had the Church set before you as the channel of grace, as the means of incorporating men into the mystical body of Christ; as a society, which ought to be co-extensive with the nations of the earth, not by the obedience of all kings and potentates to one Bishop, the Supreme Vicar of Christ, but by the establishment in every land of a National Church; which, though, in its individual jurisdiction, separate and independent, yet, should by teaching the same truths, holding the same discipline, and maintaining the same worship as the rest, prove itself to be a branch of one large society, which in its totality, ought to be coextensive with the world; and which ought to keep up among men of every clime and tongue, the knowledge of her invisible Head now passed into the heavens. Ye have thus had proclaimed to you the great truths of our holy religion, as contained in the Scriptures, as taught by the testimony of the early Church, and as testified to, by the authoritative standards of the Church of England. And, my brethren, in thus placing these truths before you, I can at the termination of my ministry among you, "take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men, for I have not shunned to declare unto you the whole counsel of God."

And now, in conclusion, I must ask permission to make to you as it were, a last parting application. The Apostle Paul, in the narrative from which the text is selected, besought the

elders of Ephesus "to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, it is more blessed to give than to receive." I would make it my last parting request to you, that you would continue to support the two local societies, the claims of which I have in each year personally enforced upon you. The one, the Relief Society, established for mitigating the sicknesses, relieving the wants, and removing the distresses of the poor immediately around us; the other, our local Missionary Institution, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel.

I fully believe in the individual responsibility, resting on the soul of every one who receives the Gospel, to impart to others a knowledge of its truths. I, at least, am free from blood-guiltiness in setting this point fully before you; and I call on you to record, that through evil report and good report, I have not shunned to declare unto you this counsel of God. I pray you, then, once again, to give your support to these institutions; to aid them, not from impulse, but from principle; not from excitement, but from conviction; not now and then, as caprice and inclination may dictate, but as a solemn duty, binding on the conscience of each; and for the fulfilment of which each will be called to give account.

It only remains for me publicly to express my thanks to those among you, from whom I have received personal kindness, whether as regards myself or as regards administering to the wants of those whom I have occasionally ventured to recommend to your notice. As long as memory endures, I shall remember, with pleasure, the period of my ministration among you. I trust that, though I am conscious of many imperfections and many short comings in the performance of my duty, yet that the period of my ministry may not have been entirely unblessed or unprofitable to some among you. In this hope, and in humble dependence on the Divine Blessing, "I now commend you to God, and to the Word of His grace, (which I have ever preached among you) which is able to build you up and to give you an inheritance among all them who are sanctified."

THE SEAMLESS COAT OF CHRIST, AN APT EMBLEM OF THE UNITY WHICH OUGHT TO CHARACTERIZE HIS CHURCH:

A

SERMON,



//.

PREACHED IN MALMSBURY ABBEY,

At the Visitation

OF THE

VEN. THE ARCHDEACON OF BRISTOL,

ON TUESDAY, JULY 11, 1848.

BY THE REV.

FREDERICK EDWARD TUSON, M.A.

VICAR OF MINETY ST. LEONARDS.

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THE VEN. THE ARCHDEACON,

AND

THE REV. THE CLERGY

OF THE NORTHERN DIVISION OF THE DEANERY OF MALMSBURY,

Chis Bermon,

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST,

IS

RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED.

ALMIGHTY and Everlasting God, by whose Spirit the whole body of the Church is governed and sanctified, receive our supplications and prayers which we offer before Thee for all estates of men in thy Holy Church, that every member of the same, in his vocation and ministry, may truly and godly serve Thee, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. *Amen*.

SERMON,

&c.

St. John xix. part of 23rd verse.

" Now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout."

WE may readily believe that no circumstance, however apparently trifling, connected with the Incarnation of our Lord, and which had been the specific object of a prophetic announcement, could be without its importance, usefulness, and interest. Not one jot or one tittle of the word of God shall fail. The voice of prophecy had declared that upon the vesture of Christ they should cast lots, and accordingly we read in the verses succeeding the text—"The soldiers therefore said among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots."

To the Christian's mind many thoughts will occur

in connexion with the seamless coat of the Saviour; for it will appear to him to be a representation of that consistency which will ever mark the character of the true disciple of Christ; it will seem in its perfect, undivided formation, to pourtray with a peculiar beauty the absolute oneness of Christian love; and further, it will be recognized as an apt emblem of the unity which ought to characterize the Church of Christ.

In pursuing this latter thought, we shall find sufficient matter for our present consideration; and if God's blessing rest upon our hearts, the subject may be, to all of us, one of interest and improvement.

It has been observed, that "the three great subjects with which a Christian Minister is concerned are, the word of God, the Church of God, and the Christian life; that circumstances and occasions will sometimes direct his thoughts to one of these, and sometimes to another, but that so long as any of the three are before him, he is within the circle of his duty."

Now, the Church of God appears very justly to challenge our particular attention upon an occasion like the present; and in dwelling upon the subject of unity, while none can deny the vital importance of this grace, as it affects the interests of the Church; yet all must allow, that we touch a chord when we approach this point, which gives now but an uncertain sound; that fresh elements of discord, at first insidious and minute, have risen up, even in

our day, to mar the harmony of that full, swelling tone, with which the voice and heart of man should speak of and adore the Church of God.

Doubtless, it is owing to the distracting effect of these discordant elements, that many, who profess to be devoted members of the Church, appear altogether to have lost sight of the truth, that one of their first and most important duties, as such, is to endeavour by every appointed means to preserve to the Church the blessed grace of Unity: and I use the term "the blessed grace of Unity;" for who can read the Prayer of Intercession which the Saviour offered up for his Church before his hour of suffering,-who can hear the voice of his Redeemer thus pleading at the throne of God: "Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are; and I pray not for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one;"—who, I ask, can hear the Saviour pleading thus, not only for his Apostles, but for all future generations of his people, without feeling that the gift of Unity He sought for them from God is indeed "a blessed grace."

And again, with what faithfulness does the Church herself follow this divine example, when, in one of her most beautiful, because most comprehensive prayers, she leads her children to pray that the good estate of the Catholic Church may be so prospered under the guidance of God's good Spirit, that all who profess and call themselves Christians may hold

the faith not only in righteousness of life, but also in unity of spirit and in the bond of peace.

The subject of Unity, then, in the Church of God, though it may be too often forgotten or avoided, cannot with propriety be regarded by any as vain or unimportant; but, on the contrary, must be admitted as one justly deserving the most anxious thought, and claiming our frequent and fervent prayers at the throne of Grace.

There was a time, when the Church, like the vesture of Christ, was "without seam, woven from the top throughout." It is not so now; and although we may not be chargeable in this generation with much that has arisen in the progress of years to rend the body of Christ; yet it becomes us to ask ourselves, Have we done nothing which has had this effect? Or, again, Are we now doing what we can to repair the error of those who have gone before us, in their privileged custody of the things which belong to God? How far the voice of condemnation should in justice follow these questions, will be a matter, perhaps, of varying opinion; and yet few can hesitate to confess that the evidences of disunion, which marked the Church when we received it from our ancestors, are still there undiminished, if not increased; and the only reason for this, which can at all satisfy the mind as it dwells upon the fact, is, that there exists but little desire, if any, to cultivate the true spirit of Unity, little disposition to combined exertion in the cause of uniformity and peace.

We, my Reverend Brethren, may receive a useful suggestion in this matter, and not less useful than true, from the expression in the text, "woven from the top throughout."

Although it is said to have always been a matter of curious inquiry how the coat of the Saviour was formed without a seam, and many have supposed it was the work and gift to their Lord of some of those pious women who ministered to Him of their substance, yet from the expression "woven from the top throughout" we may conjecture that the process of weaving, whatever may have been the manner of the work, commenced in that part of the vesture which was the top or head of it, and that all the threads throughout the texture depended connectedly upon the top, as the commencement or foundation of the work. Applying this to the subject before us, it would appear to suggest that unity, especially as it affects the ministry of the Church, must have its proportionate bearing gradually from the head throughout the whole body; and here we are at once reminded how incomplete and ineffectual that unity must prove which is unconnected with and uninfluenced by ecclesiastical discipline. use the words of Hooker, "The ministry, like all other things which are of God, He hath, by wonderful art and wisdom, soldered, as it were, together with the glue of mutual assistance, appointing the lowest to receive from the nearest to themselves what the influence of the highest yieldeth." Without a due regard, therefore, to authority on the one

hand, consistently and impartially exercised, and to attentive obedience on the other, cheerfully and habitually rendered; without a mutual desire for frequent communion with each other, on the part both of the lower orders, and those who hold the highest office, of the ministry, the work of endeavouring to promote unity in the Church will make but a sad and unsatisfactory progress. And yet the Church, even now, with her far too limited number of Bishops, is not without the means of promoting this communion with facility and order; for, in addition to the officers of the Church which are intermediate between the Parochial Clergy and their Diocesan, namely, the Archdeacons and Rural Deans, there are also legally constituted, though in too many districts slumbering in segments, the rural chapters or synods of each deanery. Opinions will and do differ upon the subject of the revival of the ruri-decanal meetings; and the present occasion would not afford sufficient opportunity to enter fully upon this question; but past experience bids me assert, that where they are held under episcopal authority, and conducted with feelings of piety and order, they tend materially and directly to draw the clergy together in mutual confidence and encourage-And inasmuch as the proceedings of each meeting would be reported to the diocesan, his more perfect acquaintance with the affairs of the Church in his diocese would follow, and each Parochial Clergyman would feel himself in the channel of a direct and periodical communication with his Bishop.

In the words of one of our Bishops:-" In union must be our strength, and between men engaged in action there cannot long be union without concert. Perhaps one of the main causes of want of strength within the Church of England at this time is the want of concert, combination, and therefore of strict union between her clergy. We act separately in our parishes, we grow to act as units on society; the man, therefore, and not the system, is brought to bear upon the various hindrances we meet with. Meanwhile, the necessary love of our own plans, peculiar modes of viewing truth, the apparently paramount importance of that part of the truth which we are most apt to contemplate; all this tends to develope a selfish standard, to lower our estimate of unity, and to sever us from our brethren. Then come suspicious thoughts of all who do but express the same truth in different modes of speech; then shyness of combined action, which is soon observed, imitated, and exaggerated by our flocks; and so the compact phalanx of the Church, which in her union would be 'terrible as an army with banners,' is broken up into a mixed and disordered multitude, and is in danger of becoming the helpless prey of the first vigorous and combined assault of her beleaguering enemies."

The annual visitations, "when," as Bishop Otter observes, "the clergy come together to hear, and not to communicate with each other," are of themselves wholly insufficient to remedy or prevent all this. We need more frequent communion; and if, after

united worship on certain given days, we made a point of all assembling together, and then in the freedom of friendly intercourse, and yet with the regularity of a prescribed assembly, we communed together upon the points of leading present interest to our parishes, and to the Church around us, surely we should find out our common points of union; should ascertain more clearly our *principles* of action; and should separate, through God's blessing, with hearts more allied to each other, and readier for combined exertion.

Some attempts to effect clerical association in a certain voluntary form may be and are made; but if unity be desired, a unity in which discipline would hold its legitimate and necessary place, the efforts to promote it must not be isolated or sectional; but the weaving of the texture must be "from the top throughout."

It has been said, that "the ministry of the Church was divinely appointed to be as it were the spinal cord of the whole body;" and this observation may lead our thoughts to another and a most important view of our subject; for, if the ministry is to the whole body of the Church what the spinal column is to the animal frame, how vitally important is it that the connexion and intercourse between the clergy and lay members of the Church should be of the most intimate and united character!

It is an opinion which prevails even yet too extensively, though perhaps less now than heretofore, that the ministry alone constitute the Church; and that the Clergy only are to be regarded as the

BODKAGON, ?R.

l estate." The false nature and fatal ch an opinion are aptly represented crision contained in the observation

Duties essential, inseparable, and long to both; and the well-being of y can never be adequately prospered, ion of the Church endeavours to affix r a responsibility, a charge, which does and vitally belong to itself.

utter the feelings of all the Clergy, low would our hearts be cheered, and anothened, if amongst the lay members ive flocks, and especially those of them igh station and corresponding influence, fellow-helpers to the truth," "fellow-the kingdom of God;" those who their exertions with ours in endeavour-out effectually the parochial system of There are some persons who are unjust the ministry to suppose that we are disand jealous of any aid, or, as they choose

our several parishes. But who amongst us could be displeased,—who be jealous, if, as ought to be, and in most cases no doubt would be the case, this desire to aid (we will not suppose it would be interference) bore the character of an organized combination, of diversity of character, with true unity of purpose;

that purpose being the "setting forth the glory of God, and setting forward the salvation of all men?"

There is but one visible authorized system of means by which these great ends can be obtained; and the Church is at once the expositor and administrator of that system; and although it is beyond the power of man, in any collective or individual capacity, to destroy or even to mar the perfect beauty of that gracious system, yet, whether the system itself be efficient, or fail in the work to which it has been appointed; whether, in its working, it receive or lose "God's grace and heavenly benediction," may, and we may believe will, depend, in no slight degree, upon the faithfulness, unity, and love of those, both clergy and laity, to whose hands, for a brief space, its administration has been entrusted.

O! that in every parish, therefore, there could be found some, yea many, who faithfully love the Church into which they have been baptized, and are willing to be "fellow-helpers to the truth" with those who are their appointed pastors,—many who, knowing that they bear on their foreheads the true mark of the great Captain of their salvation, fearlessly, and to the front, place themselves under his holy banner; and waving there the olive-branch of unity and peace, take into their hands and press to their hearts "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;" and thus, clad in the "whole armour of God," stand forth with their commissioned officer by their side,

and oppose to the "principalities, the powers, the spiritual wickedness in high places," the simple, but, to her enemies, overwhelming aspect of what the Church is, when all her professed members do hold her faith, "in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life."

And let not any say that it is too much thus to speak or think of the Church, when we read the words of St. Paul, "Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word; that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish."

Vast indeed is the field of thought opened to the mind, in contemplating the several points in which the unity of the Church may be considered; and it would be vain to attempt even a brief mention of them all in one sermon. Those which may perhaps be regarded as of the most practical utility, upon an occasion like the present, have now been shortly, though but imperfectly, noticed; and the seamless coat of our Lord has availed to draw our thoughts to the unity which ought to exist in the several orders of the ministry, as well as to that which should be cherished between the clergy and laity of the Church.

Great and sufficient good will arise from our present meditations upon the subject, if any observations shall have been made, which, under the blessing of Almighty God, may tend to awaken increased interest and anxiety upon a point so vitally important to the well-being of the Church. Yet let us all, my Brethren, remember, whatever may be our position in the Church of God now, that all our meditations, all our interest and anxiety upon subjects such as that on which our minds have been dwelling this morning, will be utterly vain, unless we so work, so watch and pray, both for ourselves and others, while we are members of the Church militant on earth, that we may all hereafter be united eternally to the Church triumphant in Heaven.

It was for this glorious and gracious consummation of his work the Saviour prayed, the night before He gave Himself for his Church: "Father, I will" (that is, I leave it as my last testamentary request)—"I will that they whom thou hast given me, and they also that believe on me through their word, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me; that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one."

This is the perfecting of unity; this is the full fruition of that love, joy, and peace, to which the true spirit of unity will finally guide us. O! "Let us not seem to come short of it," for this is "the rest that remaineth to the people of God."

THE END.

THE WISDOM OF THIS WORLD AND SPIRITUAL WISDOM COMPARED.



PREACHED TO THE

NORTH WOOTTON FRIENDLY SOCIETY.

PUBLISHED FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE SCHOOL BUILDING FUND IN THAT PARISH.

BY THE REV. O. B. TYLER, M. A.,

Perpetual Curate of North Wootton & Werminster.

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FRANCIS AND JOHN BIVINGTON, SAINT PAUL'S CHURCHYARD;
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SERMON.

Luke xvi. 8.

"And the lord commended the unjust Steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation, wiser than the children of light."

The parable of the unjust Steward was spoken by the Blessed Jesus unto His Disciples, to persons professing themselves to be such; it was not spoken unto the Pharisees, or to His enemies, but unto His followers, not the twelve Apostles alone, but unto the multitude that heard Him gladly, and by their outward conduct at least, promised obedience unto His commands.

In this respect the parable is suitable to the present occasion. I see a number of persons many of whose faces are not familiar, but who now by their outward conduct in coming to the house of God express a readiness to obey what may be taught them out of His word. The Lord

mercifully grant me power to preach boldly as I ought to preach, and that you, my friends, may not be hearers only, but doers of His word! The parable is moreover applicable to the present occasion, inasmuch as I am addressing persons who are manifestly wise in their generation as children of the world: for you belong to a society whose object it is to provide against the accidents of life, to provide for the future, when you can no longer work, when you may be turned out of employment, out of your Stewardship; your conduct is still more wise than that of the Steward, for you make this provision without injustice, you do so without robbing your master, you act quite in accordance with the Spirit of Christianity.

Our Lord who spake the parable, joined unto Himself twelve persons in particular, and they seem from what is said of the traitor Judas to have had one purse. We find the Apostles after their Lord's ascension acting in much the same manner; they had all things common; they formed themselves, if it may be so said without irreverence, into a club; they did not oblige all professing the name of Christ to put into the common fund, as is directly implied by those words of Saint Peter to Ananias, "whilst it

remained was it not thine own, and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power;" the first Christians had their common fund on account of the exigences of the times, and you act on much the same principles; you cannot always be sure of being able to work, and consequently of maintaining your families. The early Christians made provision for the poor widow, you do I believe the same. There is not a word in the Bible against such Societies as yours, your very name "Friendly Society" is in accordance with the Spirit of Him who has taught us to love one another, and said, "ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you; by this, shall all men know that ye are my Disciples, if ye love one another." Nor can that precept of taking no thought for the morrow, be brought against you: for by belonging to a Society like yours, you take away that vexatious care and anxiety for the future, which is what is manifestly meant by the precept "take no thought, that is anxiety, for the morrow," I would therefore praise you as the lord did the Steward, not indeed for being unjust, but for the prudence he displayed in making a provision for the future; the Steward might not only have been unjust, as he was, but foolish likewise, he might have taken the full measure of corn and oil, owed by his master's debtors, and applied a part to his own immediate consumption; no, he was prudent enough not to do so, but employed the unrighteous mammon, to make friends who might receive him after he had been turned out of his Stewardship.

I would therefore give my unfeigned approval of the Society to which you belong, so far as regards making a provision for the future; but I must add the concluding part of my text by way of question; are you as wise as children of light, as you are as children of the world? you cannot serve God and mammon, but you can, by God's help, pass through this world as not abusing it: yea, as I have shown, you are bound, while here, to act as children of the world, "to go to the ant and observe her ways," to make provision for the winter. But have you in like manner, acted as children of the light, that is, as Christians who are not ashamed of their acts being displayed in the broad day light: have you made provision for your souls? Have you laid up in store for the day on which you will separate from this earthly tabernacle? You have provided for the decent interment of your bodies, have you thought of what will become of your souls and bodies hereafter?-

First of all, in respect to outward decorum; have you looked upon the Church in which you were received by Baptism, as a Society formed by God; have you been as attentive to her rules, as you have been to the rules of your club? Have you attended her ordinances? for instance, you have partaken of one Sacrament in Baptism, are you a partaker of the other; do you frequent the Supper of our Lord? or do you think it hard to come even to Church and would rather pray any where else? and are you discontented with the appointment of her ministers, yea, would be every man his own self-appointed minister? I will leave you to answer these queries, and to draw the obvious conclusion, are you wiser as children of the world, as members of your club, than you are as children of light, as members of Christ's Church?

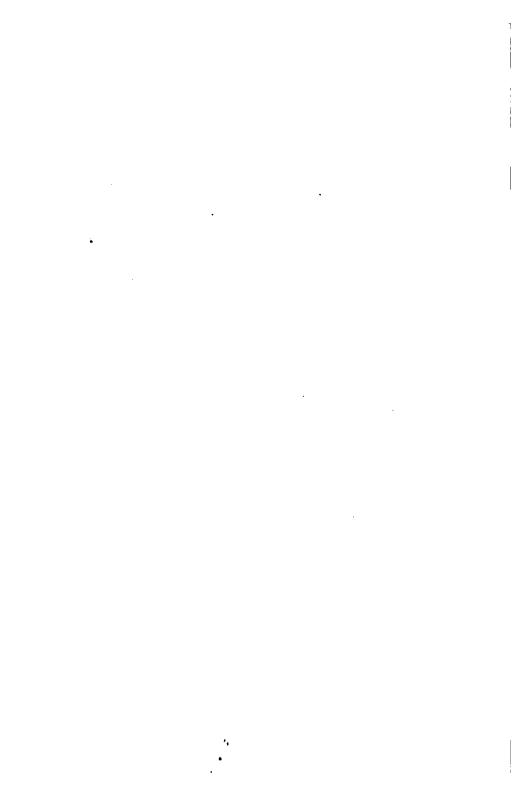
So much I have said of attention to your outward duties, in paying honour to God; and now as to the effect upon your lives. May I put the question, have you made provision for another world? Have you laid up treasure in Heaven, or have you only thought of this world, living here as if you were never to depart, yea, as if there were no judgment to come, like the

fool that said in his heart, "there is no God?" Have you been more careless of keeping God's commands, than you have been of the rules of your club, so that you have neglected to open your Bibles, or have done so in a careless and indifferent manner; It may be, hardly listening to the word of God when read; seldom or ever attending His house? Judge yourselves, my friends; these are serious charges, and perhaps may seem too serious for the occasion on which you are assembled, but they seem to me most appropriate and salutary, and I trust may, under God's blessing, be the means of checking that excess, that atrocious inconsistency, which is apt to follow the meeting of a club.

In this I praise you not, and would entreat you to make some provision against such a disgraceful occurrence, and not run in the way of temptation. You may, without breaking the Commandments, enjoy yourselves; "the Lord has given us all things richly to enjoy," but not to abuse; the Lord Jesus Christ attended a feast, and even contributed by His Divine power to its enjoyment, converting water into wine; He has also typified Heaven itself by a feast; His own institution, the Lord's Supper, is a type of the marriage feast of the Lamb in

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Heaven, but drunkenness or excess, He no where countenances, yea, He expressly declares that the drunkard "shall not inherit the Kingdom of Heaven." I have often thought, what will be the punishment of the drunkard in hell, if the rich man who only had neglected to make friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, nevertheless found himself in that place of torment. suffered thirst, and desired Lazarus to moisten, with but the tip of his finger, his tongue, if he was tormented in a flame, what degree of thirst and burning fever will he not suffer who has abused the good things that God has given? Think also of the pangs of conscience that will afflict him, lest his companions in jollity, as it is falsely called, come to the same place of torment; let such thoughts prevent any of you from enticing a brother into sin, for that will add greatly to your torments. Think not in so doing, you are acting the part of good fellowship, of hospitality; far from it, you will be mortally injuring him whom you would fain serve, and by so doing, you will reverse the name of your Society from friendly to unfriendly Society. Oh! let the object of your Society be to make provision against the day of sickness, yea, the hour of death, check any excess; remember, that



OUR HOLINESS THE MEASURE OF OUR USEFULNESS, AS MINISTERS OF CHRIST.

A SERMON,

PREACHED AT ST. THOMAS'S CHURCH, PORTSMOUTH,

ON OCCASION OF

The Visitation

OF THE

VENERABLE JOSEPH WIGRAM,

ARCHDEACON OF WINCHESTER,

MAY 11, 1848.

BY THE

REV. THOMAS WALPOLE, M.A.

RECTOR OF ALVERSTOKE, HANTS.

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SERMON,

&c.

LUKE XXII. 32.

"And when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren."

THESE words are very touching as regards St. Peter himself, to whom they were directly spoken; but are of more extensive import in relation to our own selves, as the rule by which to measure the effect and extent of our usefulness in the ministry, to which we have been called for the edification of Christ's holy Church, and to the glory of his great Name.

Our Lord had well nigh run his appointed course on earth, and had gathered around Him the chosen Apostles, to whom He was soon to delegate, in fulness of authority and blessing, the high and holy office of "ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God';" and He began distinctly to

¹ 1 Cor. iv. 1.

forecast the responsibilities in which they would be at once involved: "I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me²;" and then, foreseeing the event of St. Peter's fall and recovery, He comprehends in this short sentence an important principle of action, which embodies a rule for our influence, in fulfilment of the trust committed to us in the kingdom of heaven,—that our personal holiness is the measure of our duty, and so of our usefulness as servants of God.

When speaking of the proportionate influence of our own conversion as Christ's ministers in strengthening the brethren, our Divine Master was not contemplating the case of the inconsistent and the untrue, as of Balaam or Judas;—to have reconciled those who have cherished an unholy "mind" to the self-sacrificing duties of a holy office, would have needed severer remark. Besides, the notion is shocking, that a knowledge of the evil that is in the world would be the best qualification for reproving it. And is there not a meaning, beyond its direct import, in the Lord's words by his prophet, "If ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil?"

Conversion, as applied to St. Peter, was not a change from besetting sin, but a strengthening of a feebleness in character,—the correction of a fault,—the repair of a defect; and so was that Apostle well

² Luke xxii. 29.

³ Malachi i. 8.

fitted,—as sorrowers are the best comforters,—to strengthen them which are failing and weak-hearted, by the strength wherewith he himself was strengthened of God.

But not only so. There was a deeper truth intended as a lesson of serious instruction to us, my reverend brethren, in the pastoral charge, "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren;" in that (over and above our natural leaning to our kindover and above our common interests as "bound up" together "in the bundle of " social "life" with our fellows;) our very office, in ruling or ordering Christ's kingdom, is to be as He was-continually impressing others with his own character,-reproducing in them Himself,—drawing all men unto Him by the hidden power of his attractive humanity; which, being pure from all offence, was harmless of all capricious feeling, and so alike winning to all from its very holiness and love: and He has never ceased the same converting and strengthening influences, seeing He ever sitteth above as the "refiner" of his Church, changing them into his own "image from glory to glory, even by the Lord the Spirit 4."

Indeed, this moral influence over others is necessarily a rule of our service in Christ's kingdom, inasmuch as it is the elementary law of the kingdom of God, as well in Creation as in Regeneration. For,

all things made are an exhibition of the mind of the Creator; and the very act of creation is the necessary outpouring of the gifts and graces which are in Him, who is the fountain of love and of holiness and of life. We can hardly conceive of God, apart from his continuous Epiphany of more and more objects in which to glorify Himself; and if this be so of worlds inanimate, and creatures of inferior kind, surely we may see in man, as made "in the image of God," a being, the very issue of creative power, as an object in whom to reproduce the attributes of God Himself. So man in Eden was in body and mind an instrument from whom, at the Creator's touch, came out the harmony of one in unison with Himself—happy, because the reflexion of the God of peace-holy, because the reflexion of the God of love-without shame to "see God," because "pure in heart 5." And when man had fallen by his iniquity, and "the whole creation groaned and travailed in pain together 6" with sin, God applied a remedy, through which the alien child should be at one again with his Father, by Regeneration in the Son of man, our Saviour, in whom we are "justified," being "accepted in the beloved';" "righteous"," and "sons of God"," "renewed after the image of him that created him 1." So that, by the repro-

⁶ Rom. viii. 22. ⁵ Matt. v. 8. ⁷ Eph. i. 6.

¹ 1 John ii. 29. ⁹ 1 John iii. 10. ¹ Col. iii. 10.

ducing influence of his Spirit on the sons of men, Christ's kingdom in its leavening efficacy should rule over all, and "all the earth be filled with his majesty," till at last all shall be "subdued unto him," then "God" shall be again "all in all."

It is our parts and duties, my Reverend Brethren, in fulfilling "the ministry we have received of the Lord," to adopt the principle, in being commissioned with this responsible office, of our Lord's kingdom, and, by the moral power of self-development, to win other souls to Christ, and, in the spirit in which our Lord said, "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be truly sanctified5," to witness, as well by our preaching of "the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified to us"—in evangelizing the ungodly multitude; as by our example—in edifying the body of Christ, "for the perfecting of the saints," till we all "come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ'." And thus in the proportion of our own holiness through conversion of heart to God, shall we be useful in converting sinners from the error of their ways, and in strengthening the brethren.

It is very true that the unworthiness of the ministry hinders not the effect of Christ's ordinance, nor is the grace of God's gifts and sacraments diminished from the faithful, although ministered by

² Ps. lxxii. 19. ³ 1 Cor. xv. 28. ⁴ Col. iv. 17.

John xvii. 19. 6 Gal. vi. 14. 7 Eph. iv. 13.

evil men⁸; nevertheless, it is in the very constitution of our being to be hindrances or aids to each other; yea, the first impress of original sin was the marring of the man's perfect character by the reflective influence of her example, who had been given to man as an "help meet" for him; and man has ever since been stamping on his fellow the mark of his own image, whether of sin or of obedience, with as much reality as when "iron sharpeneth iron"." We may trace this, in moral as well as in physical effect, in the kindred relationship of race or of country, as St. Paul says, in his Epistle to Titus, of the "unruly Cretians'." And we often find in the descendants of future generations a witness of disposition, as of Esau in Herod; and in the closer alliance of heart upon heart, as in Timothy of his grandmother Lois, and his mother Eunice. from this very principle comes out in bold relief the reproducing efficacy of our personal holiness upon the flock committed to our charge, according to the import of our Lord's own parable about the pastoral care of a good shepherd,-He Himself being the pre-eminent exemplar,--- "He putteth forth his own sheep, and he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him2."

Let us then consider the practical bearing of this truth, both in regard to the efficiency of our ministry in

⁵ See Twenty-sixth Article of Religion.

Prov. xxvii. 17. See Context. John x. 4.

feeding the flock of God, which is among ourselves for oversight, that we may be ensamples to the flock, and also in regard to our mutual intercourse as brethren in the Lord's heritage.

It surely needs no elaborate proof, that a minister distinguished for personal holiness must be the promoter of holiness in others; for how shall we preach the word of truth if we walk not in the truth? how shall we advisedly invite others to "taste and see how gracious the Lord is3," if we cannot tell them what things God has done for our own souls? with how feeble an energy will our call to repentance, and our exhortations to faith, come from hearts and lips not "touched with a live coal from off the altar"." how faint the voice in showing the "people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins5," if our own iniquity is not taken away, and our own sin purged! How can we strengthen the weakhearted brethren by our comfort and counsel, unless we are ourselves converted?

The very term "strengthen the brethren" bespeaks a tender care, whilst the thought of our own conversion calls forth our sympathy as well as support: it implies experience imbibed, as Mary's, at his feet who is the great Shepherd and Bishop of our souls, that our flock may say of us as we of Him, "He shall feed me in a green pasture, and lead me forth beside the waters of comfort; He shall convert my

² Ps. xxxiv. 8. ⁴ Isa. vi. 6. ⁵ Isa. lviji. 1.

soul, and bring me forth in the paths of righteousness⁶."

And never was there an age when the Church needed more a holy ministry to become effectual for the Church's good. It is by the secret yet not unfelt strength of a holy life, that comparative feebleness in intellectual and natural gifts is superseded by the invisible power of the consistently Christian character; for the most callous to spiritual things are softened, and the resister of the Holy Ghost tamed, by the persuasive mastery of a holy man speaking of holy truth, who wins more attention by the respect he commands, than by eloquence the most convincing or arguments the most clear.

Lessons such as these, which he that runs may read, are of highest worth in this our era of Christianity, when the Church's teaching has a passport amongst all classes of Society: and if we carry with us, in our goings in and out amongst men, our credentials of personal holiness, our very presence will check the vices of the great, and repress the excesses of the luxurious, and stop the laughter of "fools;" and it will lift up the poor into one common level of piety and godliness,—tell the mere sensualist that the lust of brute beasts is not for such as we are, and expose the shame of ignorance and sin. And especially as the aspect of the world exhibits in open view, beyond the natural exaggeration of the time present, a foreground of living beings, stirring

⁶ Ps. xxiii. 2. 3.

and alive to their common capacities and endowments as men, and therefore ready to be moulded into the beautiful form of a Christian community, each one acknowledging his best importance when leaning in fraternity of feeling upon his fellow, and knowing no lesser individuality than the harmonious unity of Christ's holy Church, in which, whilst ministering to one another, we are ministering to Christ Himself, and serving, are the servants of others for his sake. Herein, too, are we likely to have our office in strengthening the brethren called into lively exercise, because men's opinions, as well as actionstheir mental as well as bodily energies, are peculiarly impatient, stirring, and unquiet. There is a Bethesda of change in the troubled waters of society around us; and it is our part to trace this movement to its very depth, to show that God's hand must be in it, that an angel has come down into the pool, and thus to stand by for guidance—for solace and for help-and quietly put men in, that they may be cured by the Great Healer of the Nations. In such an age it will not do for us to content ourselves (as if we could certainly find more nearness to God) in the continual solitude of the cloister, with the notion that we may there best strengthen our brethren alone by our studies, our prayers: if we would win back to Christ and his Church the neglected masses of our practical countrymen, we must ourselves be practical men: we must come forth amidst the din and bustle of our commercial

towns, and add to the increasing hum of our many peopled villages, by telling men to measure the value of their gains and enterprizes by the cross of the Redeemer, invoking to purity and peace the rioters and revellers of the barrack or the beach 7; and proclaiming in men's usual haunts, (and may God grant our rulers grace to cry aloud in the senate!) that "the Lord reigneth, be the people never so impatient: he sitteth between the Cherubims, be the earth never so unquiet "." When I say that active duties in our pastoral care of souls is the most befitting a restless age, I would not be supposed to undervalue the importance of a learned Clergy. I do not deny that the more learning we can acquire, the more useful will be our labours among a people becoming more and more educated, intellectual, and I also believe, that the more we are called out into busy spheres of duty, the more frequently must we be on our knees in retirement for renewed strength; and truly happy is the privilege of those amongst us who can go to the House of the Lord, and there, on holy ground, sanctify their thoughts for the responsibilities of the opening day by the daily offering of the Church's prayers. Still, it is in some crisis of the Church's struggles against the adverse circumstances of a corrupting world as in

⁷ An allusion to local evils too notorious in the town where the Sermon was preached, and in parts of the neighbouring town over which the author has spiritual oversight.

^{*} Psalm xcix. 1.

some trials of our physical powers, the cure is more found in action than in rest, and the healthfulness of the body is strengthened by the lively exercise of those members, whose proper functions it is to call forth the realities of its life.

And in this respect have we a serious call, as regards our brethren in the ministry, to strengthen one the other; and insomuch as in our own experience we are converted, shall we fulfil this office of If there be combinations for social good, and love. for social evils; if there be a fusion of several parties for the common weal in preserving for our monarchy its constitutional government, as well opposed to any absolute tyranny as to a wild democracy; or, if "hand join in hand" to effectuate plots of wickedness, and to attain unlawful ends; if unity be the symbol of order, as it is the fearful power of disorder:-shall the Church forfeit her own privilege of unity and peace? Shall we, brethren in the ministry, allow Satan to prevail over us, robed as an angel of light, with his favourite device to divide and conquer?

God forbid! Let us rather merge our differences, and allay our prejudices, and soften down our disagreements, in the unison of that charity which "suffereth long, and is kind—envieth not—vaunteth not itself—is not puffed up—thinketh no evil—rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;

⁹ Psalm xi. 21.

beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things 1." And let us follow the example of St. Peter, in listening to our Master's words, "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren."

How entirely the brethren of the primitive Church were strengthened by this sympathy, and, in the outset of their witness for Christ, had cheering encouragement against weak-heartedness at the first great persecution, by the marks of boldness in St. Peter, who withstood the opposers of the Gospel with the holy resolution, "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye2;" and let not the many other tokens of Christian heroism and fellowship which characterized this remarkable Apostle be lost upon us; rather let us act as he acted towards Saul after his conversion; as Barnabas, a brother "of consolation," let us "consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works'." And as he was afterwards the willing instrument for conveying to the Gentiles the assurance of our common salvation in the Son of Man, the Saviour who "died for all." let us endeavour "to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," being drawn together by the cords of love out of all schools of prophesying (if I may use the term) into our oneness of work in evangelizing the world; or, if any of our brethren

¹ 1 Cor. xiii. 4—7. ² Acts iv. 19.

³ Heb. x. 24.

be timid or wavering, let us support them with the right hand of fellowship, as Peter did John Mark, who, from a backward confessor became an unflinching martyr. Nor must we forget the aid from above which was promised to St. Peter before his fall, advising us, too, where to look for help, that we may receive strength equal to our day. "I have prayed for thee" (said the great Intercessor of his Church) "that thy faith fail not4." that the Apostle was left to the passive influence of mediatorial efficacy, he was also commandedand we must adopt the rule - to "watch and pray, lest we enter into temptation 5;" at once reminded of the Christian paradox, "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, whilst God worketh in you to will and to do of his good pleasure 6," as the secret of all our strength, as well as the mystery of our conversion; and that, if we look to stand in the faith of the sons of God, we must not be careless to keep ourselves; for whether it be in serving or in ministering to the Lord—to our own safety our own sedulity is required; then shall we have nothing to fear, as we may say (in the words of one who was holy in his own experience as a Christian pastor, as judicious in his teaching), "I have a Shepherd full of kindness, full of care, and full of power, unto Him I commit myself; his own finger hath engraven the sentence in the

⁴ Luke xxii. 32. ⁴ Matt. xxvi. 41.

⁶ Phil. ii. 12.

tablets of my heart, 'Satan hath desired to winnow thee as wheat, but I have prayed that thy faith fail not,' therefore the assurance of my hope I will labour to keep as a jewel unto the end; and by labour, through the gracious mediation of his prayer, I shall keep it'."

⁷ The conclusion of Hooker's learned and comfortable Sermon on Perpetuity of Faith in the Elect.

THE END.

GILBERT & RIVINGTON, Printers, St. John's Square, London.

THE

UNCONTROVERSIAL PREACHING

OF THE

PAROCHIAL CLERGY,

ENFORCED FROM THE BEATITUDES.

"ALL THE GENTILE WORLD CANNOT SHOW US, OUT OF ALL THEIR GREAT MASTERS OF MORALITY, THEIR MOST REFINED PHILOSOPHERS, SUCH A COLLECTION OF SUBLIME AND ACCURATE PRECEPTS OF LIVING, AS ARE DELIVERED IN ONE SINGLE SERMON OF OUR SAVIOUR'S; THAT, I MEAN, UPON THE MOUNT."

Abp. Sharpe's Sermons.

Concio ad Clerum.

THE

UNCONTROVERSIAL PREACHING

OF THE

PAROCHIAL CLERGY.

ENFORCED FROM

The Beatitudes:



DRAWN UP FOR DELIVERY AT ST. MARY'S, OXFORD,

JANUARY 9, 1848.

BY

JOHN WOOD WARTER, B.D.

CHRIST CHURCH, OXFORD;
RECTOR OF PATCHING, AND VICAR OF WEST TARRING, SUSSEX;
SOMETIME CHAPLAIN TO THE BRITISH EMBASSY, COPENHAGEN.

"Regard not who it is which speaketh, but weigh only what is spoken."

Hooker. Preface, i. § 1.

PRO ECCLESIA DEI! PRO ECCLESIA DEI!—Abp. Whitaif.

LONDON:

FRANCIS & JOHN RIVINGTON, St. PAUL'S CHURCH WARD, AND WATERLOO PLACE.

1848.

"First heaven must dwell in man, then man in heaven shall dwell."

PHINEAS FLETCHER'S "Purple Island."

"Though he made many sermons, yet these two sermons, the one in Matthew, the other in Luke, ought to be regarded most above all others; for they contain the sum of a Christian man's life."

LATIMER'S SERMONS.

"Here we may see (what the philosophers so much desired) the true living idea of virtue and goodness; nay, more, what it is to be a Christian, an interior Christian, a Christian indeed."

NORRIS ON THE BEATITUDES, " To the Reader."

"The Holy Jesus, being entered upon his prophetical office, in the first solemn sermon gave testimony that He was not only an interpreter of laws then in being, but also a lawgiver, and an angel of the new and everlasting covenant; which, because God meant to establish with mankind by the mediation of his Son, by his Son also he now began to publish the conditions of it; and that the publication of the Christian law might retain some proportion at least, and analogy of circumstance, with the promulgation of the Law of Moses, Christ went up into a mountain, and from thence gave the oracle."

JEREMY TAYLOR.

'Ακούσωμεν μετά άκριβείας τῶν λεγομένων' εἰρηται μὲν γὰρ πρὸς ἐκείνους, ἐγράφη δὲ καὶ διὰ τοὺς μιτὰ ταῦτα ἄπαντας διὰ δὴ τοῦτο προσίχει μὲν τοῖς μαθηταῖς δημηγορῶν' οὐκ εἰς ἐκείνους δὲ περιέστησι τὰ λεγόμενα, ἀλλ' ἀδιορίστως προάγει τοὺς μακαρισμοὺς ἄπαντας.

CHRYSOST. Hom. xv. in Matt.

PREFACE.

Wishing for peace, three years ago I published my Teaching of the Prayer Book, as I had done Plain Practical Sermons the year preceding; and, with the same intent, under the present uneasy and restless state of matters ecclesiastical, I have been induced to publish this Sermon. It was not delivered, but drawn up for delivery, in the University pulpit, as is expressed in the title-page. Parochial matters, which have always the first claim, hindered my availing myself of the turn provided for me by the courtesy of the Dean of Christ Church at that time.

It will readily be surmised, that passing events influenced the composition of the Sermon. The spirit is, I trust, in accordance with our Saviour's teaching, in that most excellent of all Sermons, The Sermon on the Mount. Coming events, if

I augur not amiss, render such a Discourse not ill-timed. Surrounded as we are with Papists who play into the hands of Puritans, and with Puritans—(the Pope's journeymen and janizaries, as South and Barrow style them)—who play into the hands of Papists,—with Neologists, and with unbelieving Chartists,—with Free-thinkers, and with Free-livers,—nothing seems better, at least in country cures, where, as George Herbert says in his "Country Parson," "the people are thick and heavy," than plain unsophisticated preaching.

We need not doubt but that Jeremy Taylor said well, "All God's laws are plain in all matters of necessary duty; and when all men are to be guided, learned and unlearned, the rule is plain and easy, because it is necessary it should be so '." Let our preaching be accordingly, and, by God's help, we shall win souls to Christ, even when, to outward appearances, the spirit of Antichrist is in the ascendancy!

The Author takes this opportunity of saying, that his Colloquies on the Church and Church Subjects are suspended for the present, although

¹ Ductor Dubitantium, vol. xi. p. 425.

three-parts complete, as many portions of that work, written some time ago, would appear personal, after the collision he has come to with the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England in defence of the POOR OF WEST TARRING. He has no doubt but that, had his lamented Diocesan, the late Archbishop of Canterbury, lived, he would have found means to have defended their cause. His cautious non-interference, as chairman, was as invaluable as his delicacy was appreciated by all who had ever to deal with him. There is a time when the prudent keep silence, for it is an evil time!

"Reader!" said the some time well-known author of the 'Soul's Conflict,' R. Sibbes, "Some will be ready to deprave the labours of other men; but, so good may be done, let such ill-disposed persons be what they are, and what they will be, unless God turn their hearts; and so I commend thee and this poor treatise to God's blessing."

VICABAGE HOUSE, WEST TARRING, June, 1848. "DIRECT THY CHURCH, O LORD, IN ALL HER PETITIONS FOR PEACE, TEACH HER WHEREIN HER PEACE CONSISTS, AND WARN HER PRON THE WORLD, AND BRING HER HOME TO THEE; THAT ALL THOSE THAT LOVE THY PEACE, MAY AT LAST HAVE THE REWARD OF THE SONS OF PEACE, AND REIGN WITH THEE IN THY KINGDOM OF PEACE FOR EVER. GRANT THIS, O GOD, FOR THY SON'S SAKE, JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD, TO WHOM WITH THEE, AND THE HOLY GHOST, BE ASCRIBED ALL PRAISE, MIGHT, MAJESTY, AND DOMINION, NOW AND FOR EVER."

The Prayer of JOHN HALES, the ever memorable.

"JESUS, MY LORD, HAVE MERCY UPON ME! I BELIEVE THEE, I KNOW THEE TO BE THE SON OF THE EVER-LIVING GOD; NOT MORE FROM THE MIRACLES THOU HAST WROUGHT, THAN FROM THE WORDS THAT THOU HAST SPOKEN. THY WORDS ARE NO LESS A DEMONSTRATION OF INFINITE WISDOM, THAN THY WORKS OF INFINITE POWER; AND I MOST HUMBLY IMPLORE THY PAVOUR AND MERCY, BOTH AS MY SAVIOUR AND MY GOD."

How's Devout Meditations.

SERMON.

&c.

MATT. v. 1, 2.

"And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a moun-TAIN: AND WHEN HE WAS SET, HIS DISCIPLES CAME UNTO HIM: AND HE OPENED HIS MOUTH, AND TAUGHT THEM."

Those blessed feet, shod ever with the preparation of the Gospel of Peace, were now bearing the Lord of life, in and out, amongst that people, unto whom He was first sent, and among whom He was manifest in the flesh! The Sun of Righteousness had arisen with healing on his wings, the Shiloh that was to come had come! The second year of his sacred ministry was now, it would seem, commenced. Nazareth left, "the land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles;" even this "people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light" had "sprung up." Esaias had prophesied that 15, 16. so it should be, and thus it was. That prophecy, likewise, of ancient days, was pressing onward, and

Gen. xlix. 10.

the words stood forth in bolder relief. "unto HIM shall the gathering of the people be." Whether most to the wonderment of Jew or Gentile, " from that time"—from the time of his settlement at Capernaum—"Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent:

Matt. iv.

for the kingdom of heaven is at hand:" to which it is presently added, "And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people. And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them. And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judæa, and from beyond Jordan. And seeing the multitudes,"—are the words of the text,—" he went up into a mountain: and when he Matt. iv. 23 was set, his disciples came unto him: and he opened 25; v. 1, his mouth, and taught them."

Such is the introduction to the Sermon on the Mount in the Gospel according to St. Matthew, and I stop not to inquire whether it be misplaced,—whether or not it be one and the same with that recorded by St. Luke, -whether it took place after the calling of the twelve,—whether or not, at this time, the names "disciple" and "apostle" were marked and defined,—questions which might, perhaps, in a Concio ad Clerum, be legitimately dwelt upon, even as they are in Harmonies or Catenas.

Again, it would turn little to edification to dwell upon the fact, that in St. Matthew, our blessed Lord Matt. v. 1; spake, sitting; in St. Luke, He stood in the plain. Lukevi. 17. Neither, again, could it be a matter of vital importance, to explain exactly whether the disciples alone, or the multitudes also (which, however, seems to have been the fact), did hear, and wonder at the gracious words that proceeded from his lips. great point is, that "He taught them as one having Luke vii. authority, and not as the Scribes." There could be 28,29. hardly room for doubt with the willing-hearted and obedient, but that He was not only the great Pro-PHET, but the great TEACHER also; and even the disobedient and unwilling must have had searchings of heart, and great ones too. It was a marvel to see such things in Galilee!

To us, it matters not whether this wonderful Sermon were delivered on Mount Tabor,—what were the number of the Beatitudes in St. Matthew, what in St. Luke, or whether, in the latter, the Beatitudes and the woes answered the one to the other, after the system of the Hebrew parallelism,—nor these, nor other questions are of real import,—the great matter is, that we find the doctrine accompanying the teaching,—that Christ was there, in

[&]quot;That which many do comment concerning the octonary number of the Beatitudes, hath too much curiosity and little benefit."—Lightfoot's Hor. &c. in loc., vol. ii. p. 136.

teaching no less glorious, though emptied of his glory, and in the fashion of a man, for us men and for our salvation. "As the high priest," says one 2, "passing through the holy place, when he went up to the Holy of Holies to consult the oracle, heard the voice as of a man speaking from the mercy-seat; so in contemplating this portion of the New Testament, we seem to have passed on to the most spiritual communication of God to man. Freed from the types and shadows of the Mosaic law, and rescued from the cloudy traditions and perversions of the Pharisees, the light of the Sun of truth breaks forth in all its splendour. We hear, from an infallible oracle, the utter overthrow and refutation of all the false hopes and rabbinical corruptions, which had so long perverted the spirit of the Divine law."

These considerations thrown out, in which nothing is detracted from the advancement of useful learning, spoken against only by those who either have it not, or are less friendly to true religion, my course will now be to speak of the introductory "Blessings" or "Beatitudes" of that holy Sermon, unto which the text is, as it were, the door of entrance,

These words are from a note in Townsend's Harm., see vol. i. p. 185. He adds, just below, "He taught them in plain and simple language, such as his hearers constantly understood, and the most ignorant and unlearned in this age, (with but little exception arising from the passages particularly referring to Jewish customs,) can still thoroughly comprehend."—p. 186.

having first premised the object of such a line of preaching from this place, which some have considered rather as a chair for profounder learning, than a pulpit from whence lowlier instruction might issue, under God's blessing, for the instruction of many.

The object I have in view is this,—The uncon-TROVERSIAL PREACHING OF THE PAROCHIAL CLERGY. IN TIMES OF DOCTRINAL AND POLEMIC EXCITEMENT. Many, possibly, who may hear me, may think that this is not likely to be the case,—many, who may be conversant with parochial administrations, will sorrowfully confess that it is so. Neither may it altogether be blamed and censured without excep-The zeal of the warm-hearted pushes them onwards to the battle-front, as they think, to the glory of the Lord. To hold back were to be neither hot nor cold, but an act rather of Ephraim's more timid children, "who being harnessed, and carrying Ps. lxxviii. bows, turned themselves back in the day of battle;" 10. and so, with much sincerity and earnestness, but less perhaps of judgment, (when "the prudent shall keep silence in that time, for it is an evil time,") somewhat Amosv. 13. like to the old Puritan war-cry is raised, and the watch-word runs to and fro throughout the land, "Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty." Judg. v. 23.

Now, it is argued, that, in general, and before a

mixed audience, many rather than fit, such a course of preaching is little practical, little availing to the edification of the Christian man; and it is believed that that excellent worthy of our Church spake very close to the truth, when, in his "Rules and Advices to the Clergy," he thus instructed them: "In your sermons to the people, often speak of the four last things; of death and judgment; heaven and hell; of the life and death of Jesus Christ; of God's mercy to repenting sinners, and his severity against the impenitent. Speak but very little of the secret and high things of God, but as much as you can of the lowness and humility of Christ." again, "Let no preacher bring before the people, in his sermons or discourses, the arguments of great and dangerous heresies, though with a purpose to confute them; for they will much easier retain the objection, than understand the answer." No better advice, in the ordinary course of things, for "plentiful goodness," apart from disputation, is laid up for those that fear God. As saith the Psalmist, "Thou shalt hide them privily by thine own presence from

² See Jer. Taylor's Works, "Rules and Advices to the Clergy," vol. xiv. pp. 500, 501, § 51. 57. ed. Heber. Jewel's object was the same when he said at Paul's Cross, "Undoubtedly, I could never yet perceive, by any reading, either of the Scriptures, or else of other profane writings, but that the people of all ages hath evermore been readier to receive idolatry, than to learn the distinctions and quiddities of logic or philosophy."

—Works, vol. i. p. 17. ed. Jelf.

the provoking of all men: thou shalt keep them secretly in thy tabernacle from the strife of tongues." Ps. xxxi.

Very firmly impressed with these views, the result, under God, of many years' constant and unremitted parochial supervision, I proceed now to remark upon the "Beatitudes" referred to; and, if I mistake not, were our lives squared thereunto, the Holy Spirit of God helping our infirmities, we should indeed show forth the fruit of good living, exemplifying in these, the bodies of our death, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

Luke ii. 14.

Then, first, "Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven;" or, as it stands in St. Luke, (no matter whether the same sermon or not,) "Blessed be ye poor; for your's is the kingdom of God."

Lukevi. 20.

I. Herein, then, we see the blessed of Him, in whose name Tabor and Hermon rejoiced. The 13. violent of this world have no part in it; to the poor, the poor in spirit, is the blessing consigned; with it, too, the body's poverty has no necessary concern. "Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver,

^{&#}x27;As did that Sinai in Moses. Jer. Taylor observes, "That the publication of the Christian law might retain some proportion at least, and analogy of circumstance, with the promulgation of the Law of Moses, Christ went up into a mountain, and from thence gave the oracle." — Consid. on the viii. Beatitudes, Works, vol. ii. p. 442. See also Hammond's Practical Catechism, lib. ii. § i. Works, vol. i. p. 28. Folio.

Gen. xiii. 2. and in gold," but withal poor IN SPIRIT, and the "father of the faithful." So likewise may those tens of thousands be, who, knowing wealth to be a snare, are liberal stewards of the manifold gifts of God. Still, the possessions of this world must be looked to thoughtfully, because a "woe" is denounced against those who are rich, and have "received" their "consolation" here, without defending or providing for "the fatherless children, and widows, and all that are desolate and oppressed." Litany. Against such, though in the first instance the inference was special, the proverb yet holdeth good, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom Matt. xix. of God!" As our blessed Lord condescended to explain his own words, "Children, how hard is it for them that TRUST IN RICHES to enter into the Mark x. 24. kingdom of God!"

Take we, then, the words as we find them, and there is matter enough to arrest the Christian man's attention, even as there was to arrest that of the Jew, unto whom our Lord was speaking, and who well understood the phrase, "Better it is to be of an humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud." So that we may, in a more extended sense, apply the term to the "shephal ruach," that is to say, to the lowly and contrite one,—to such as brought down, and kept low, great self-opinion, and higher thoughts, whether they were rich or poor. And this, in every congregation, is

Prov. xvi.

the practical point; He that was "meek and lowly Matt. xi. in heart" hath declared it.

We do well, then, to impress it,—and this too, first and foremost, and to the very last also. It should be the Alpha and Omega of every Christian minister's preaching, because our original corruption is ever lifting up its heel against it. Why else standeth it in the fore-front of our dear Lord's Sermon? Why, but for this, that without it we are hardly capable of receiving the atonement.

We are all destitute of holiness,—born into the world "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." Such is our first state,—and, what is Rev. iii. 17. more, even since we are regenerate and born anew by the Holy Spirit, our self-love and self-opinion seems yet to struggle the more to rear itself on high, as if abashed at the "beauty of holiness." We are full, think the many, and in need of nothing,—and, as long as this state of mind remains in us, the new man is hardly formed; the Holy Spirit is hindered from renewing us day by day; there is no poverty of spirit. As said that trenchant divine, "He who thinks himself holy and righteous enough, is a most unfit subject for the Gospel to work upon 5."

^{*} See South's Sermon on this Beatitude, Works, vol. vi. p. 417. The case of Laodicea is naturally alluded to by him, as well as Jer. Taylor. See ut supra, p. 446, and Hammond, ut supra, p. 29.

But then, whether under coif or cowl, in the busy city or the lone hamlet, in seminaries or in market-places,—is not this the spirit which we all find, unless it be kept down by God's holy fear and love? It must be confessed it is; and every sermon we preach, to ourselves or others, should be imbued with that holy exordium of our blessed Lord. He knew what was in man, and spake what He knew for his good alway.

Affixed to the blessing before us, as to those that followed after, is a reward; it being natural to all faithful men, as unto Moses of old time, to have Heb. xi. 26. "respect to the recompence of the reward;" for those who speak otherwise, speak not of human nature as it is, but after high-flown notions inconsistent with a state of imperfection. The reward here is, "Theirs is the kingdom of heaven," which, so to say, flows on and is inclusive of the rest. The meaning is, such Christians as are of a contrite and humble spirit, have their spirits and hearts revived—(if with persecutions, as is not unfrequent, the greater the paradox to the world)—by those blessings which are consigned over to them in the Gospel of The riches of earth and heaven are Jesus Christ. theirs. The one they take by the way, having foretastes of eternity by the riches of God's grace,—the other is in reversion, when the grave and the gate of death is passed 6.

⁶ Hammond's words are, "This kingdom of grace here is

Thus, without dwelling longer on particulars, we have a glimpse of what is to be drawn from this Beatitude, and to be practically applied. And, nothing Pelagian rests upon the man poor in spirit. In him it is God that worketh to will and to do. He knoweth his Lord's words to his comfort, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure

Luke xii. to GIVE you the kingdom." He laboureth in the 32. Lord, but recollecteth well that the kingdom of heaven on earth, as well as "the inheritance of the saints in light" above, is a GIFT. And so, such an one thinketh not with the unsanctified and the unholy still, that they may repent when they list, and turn them to God, but his prayer for himself, and for his brethren is this: "Turn THOU us unto thee, O Lord, and WE shall be turned." Who, then, Lam. v. 21. will not willingly lift up his voice with the three children, and say, "O ye holy and humble men of heart, bless ye the Lord; praise Him, and magnify him for ever ?!"

The second Beatitude is, "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted;" Matt. v. 4. or, as it stands in St. Luke, "Blessed are ye that weep now: for ye shall laugh."

II. The sense of these words is, evidently, Blessed are they that mourn for their sins; as

but an inchoation of that glory hereafter; and he that liveth here the life of an humble Christian, shall there be sure to reign the life of a victorious saint." *Pract. Cat.* ut supra, p. 29.

⁷ Benedicite.

2 Cor. vii. 10.

2 Kings v.

St. Paul says, "Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of." Other sorrow there may be which is not godly,—sorrow, that is, which is unchastened,—which may have reference to mere earthly loss or damage, such as that of money, of oliveyards and vineyards, after Gehazi's sort; and this, the "sorrow of the world," but "worketh death." Herefrom ariseth no cause for comfort, none for laughter. Generally, then, this Beatitude may be consigned to the penitent; they shall be comforted with the assurance that their transgression is blotted out and their sin pardoned. "Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the

Eccles. vii. 3, 4. Eccles. iii.

will not be found contrary to the emotions of the human breast implanted there by the Almighty. For though the wise man said, "Sorrow is better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better;" and, "The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning; but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth." Yet did he also say, "There is a time to weep, and a time to laugh." The truth is, that all emotions must be chastened and brought under the yoke of Christian sobriety; and it is because men are not apt to understand the grace of mourning that the Scriptures are so

Thus understood, the blessedness of mourning

Lord will not impute sin."

much upon it. The world laughs loud when it hath rather cause for sorrow, because it lieth in wickedness. Somehow or other, did we understand it aright, without enthusiastic reveries and needless mawkishness of feeling, sorrow has indeed its grace; and when the heathen spoke of the delight of woe, they spoke a great truth, though they understood it not. And the proverb of the ancients was true,—'Αγαθοὶ ἀριδάκρυες ἄνδρες ⁸,—" Generous-hearted men are ready with their tears." Taken into the sanctuary, light falls upon such words, and they are understood to Christian effects.

It is from Scripture we learn how mourning is not for itself,—but for sin, and thus, as one says, "in order to many good ends !." For example, as we "fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in our flesh," we are drawn higher and col. i. 24. higher unto Him who is said to have laughed never 2,—once, only, to have "rejoiced in spirit," Luke x. 21. many times to have wept. It is thus that we are disciplined to this truth; "We must through

* G. Parœmiogr. Græc. p. 2. 231. ed. Gaisford. Εἴρηται ἐπὶ τῶν σφόδρα πρὸς ἔλεον ῥεπόντων. Chaucer's line is,—

"Pitee renneth sone in gentil herte."

The Knight's Tale.

¹ Jer. Taylor.

² "Of this Christ became to us the great example; for, as St. Basil reports a tradition of Him, that he never laughed, but wept often. If we mourn with Him, we also shall rejoice in the joys of eternity." *Jer. Taylor*, ut supra, p. 448.

Acts xiv. much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God."

Entrance thereunto, (Christ's precious blood-shedding ever borne in mind,) is ministered chiefly unto

Rom. v. 3. those in whom "tribulation worketh patience;" so that St. Paul's words to the Thessalonians were not a remembrancer only, but an exhortation also, "Verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know." Full sure, one way or another, each Christian man shall bear his cross. Persecutions and afflictions await him. Yea, that truth never faileth,—"And all that will live godly in

Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."

2 Tim. iii. 12.

These and the like considerations with reference to this Beatitude are material, teaching us to assimilate what the world looks upon as contraries or paradoxes, blind to these steps in the ladder celestial; such as are, patience, experience, and the hope that "maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost

Rom. v. 5. which is given us." The Scripture teaching is, that godly sorrow is the highway to comfort; and St. Paul spoke with full purpose of heart when thus again he addressed the converts at Thessalonica: "Ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in Much Affliction, with Joy of the Holy Ghost;" and the Christian watchword is, "as sorrowful, yet alway re-

2 Cor. vi. 10.

JOICING;" and St. James is easily understood, " Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be

turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall James iv. lift you up."

It takes time to be schooled in the sacred lesson, but He of whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, spake aright, " It is good for me that I have Ps. exix. been in trouble, that I may learn thy statutes." Good 71. is it for us all, or the Son of David had not pronounced the mourners "BLESSED!" The sin that is mourned over with many tears, is sure to be washed out in his blood. Nor need we mourn for our own sins only-those of others, in Church or State, may fare the better for godly sorrow on their behalf. Monica mourned not in vain, over Austin her son. The child of so many tears, as St. Ambrose said unto her, could not perish and be lost. Understand it as we may, it is a truth inspired. "Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide James v. a multitude of sins." Charity also and tears are not 20. far apart, and "charity," too, "shall cover the multi- 1 Pet. iv. tude of sins."

Then, for that "he that now goeth on his way weeping, and beareth forth good seed, shall doubtless come again with joy, and bring his sheaves with him;"—what can we do better, as one expresses it, 7. than pray for "the spirit of contrition, the gift of mourners, and the grace of tears," and that in the good Collect's words,--" Create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we worthily lamenting

our sins, and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain of thee, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness, through Jesus Christ our Lord 3."

The third Beatitude is, "Blessed are the meek:

III. Human passions, unrestrained, being the abettors of every sin, and "the wrath of man" working any thing rather than "the righteousness of James i. God,"-He that rode on, "because of the word Ps. xlv. 5. of truth, of MEEKNESS, and righteousness," would have his followers do the like; and therefore, having in the first instance pronounced those who were "POOR IN SPIRIT" blessed, so beautiful is the temper! he addeth yet again, "BLESSED ARE THE MEEK." Wherein, as St. Chrysostom saith, he weaves into his discourse words to which his hearers, as Jews, were accustomed,—even these words of David, "The meek-spirited shall possess the earth, Ps. xxxvii. and shall be refreshed in the multitude of peace "."

We read in the last of the Prophets—"And now Mal. iii. 15. we call the proud happy." Such was the then state of the Jewish world, so opposed unto Him who

^a Ash-Wednesday.

⁴ See Hom. xv. on St. Matt. (Oxf. Trans. vol. i. p. 203.) Jer. Taylor refers to the same passage, "Our Blessed Saviour chose to describe this Beatitude in the words of the Psalmist, so inviting his disciples to an excellent precept, by the insinuation of those Scriptures which themselves admitted." See ut supra, p. 450.

was " meek and lowly of heart." Such were the Matt. xi. Pharisees specially, who declared in their haughtiness, " This people who knoweth not the law are Time was it, then, for One who should John vii. teach otherwise, mighty withal to save, Himself to come forth, manifest in the flesh, and to declare this truth, that men of quiet, courteous, affable, and forgiving tempers, overcoming evil with good, were blessed! As saith our own Chrysostom-"The gentle and softer spirits, persons not turbulent or unquiet, not clamorous or impatient, not over-bold or impudent, not querulous or discontented, not brawlers or contentious, not nice or curious, but men who submit to God, and know no choice of fortune or employment or success, but what God chooses for them; having peace at home, because nothing from without does discompose their spirit '.''

Behold, then, stoic apathy and philosophic araραξία brought into the sanctuary,—coals, as it were, of fire heaped upon it; the unworldly spirit cast out and refined, and melted down to Christian love; the copesmate ever and the pewfellow of meekness! Whose spirit is not stirred within him at such a character? Who saith not that God is there of a truth? Full sure, did the simple preaching and living (so well coupled in the Litany) of our 18,000 clergy in the land show this forth abun-

³ Jer. Taylor.

dantly, there would be no "great forsaking" in the midst of us. The higher points of doctrine are declared in our Creeds; it is the lowlier Christian practice, which, under God, and by the power of his might, shall convert souls unto Christ!

And what then! matters would not be as they are; though on this side the grave, heresies, and the disputers of this world, must exist ever for the trial of our faith. For, as under the Jewish Dispensation, the "MEEK" should possess the earthly, so shall their Christian antitypes the heavenly, Canaan. And, more literally still, not in the land of Jewry alone, but throughout the whole world, should their simple faith be bruited forth; and they who lived as Christians, should go forth "conquering and to conquer," and so, possess the earth 6.

To which, it may be added yet, that although

This, I suppose, is what is intended by the words of Schoëttgen in his Horæ Hebraicæ in Evangel. Matt. "Ipsi cum religione sua, non in terra Judaica solum, sed et per totum terrarum orbem dominabuntur." Jer. Taylor's words are, "It is heaven that is designed by this promise; though this grace take in also the refreshments of the earth by equivalence, and suppletory design."—p. 450 ut supra. The words below are Adam Littleton's. See Sermon, part ii. p. 269. Both his sermons are in their usual racy style. Ant. Farindon's are very striking sermons on this text. See especially the passage beginning with "And in these times of hurry and noise," &c. vol. iii. p. 29. Latimer says, "Some expound 'the land' for eternal life, but it may be understood of this world too; for they that be patient and bear and suffer, God will reward them here in this world, and yonder too."—Vol. i. p. 482.

heaven is the end designed in the promise attached to this Beatitude, "and a new earth, wherein dwell-2 Pet. iii. eth righteousness"; the earth that now is, need not 13. be lost sight of; for the after-words of this most holy Sermon on the Mount, refer to both; "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you." There is no strict and defined Matt. vi.33. promise, it is true, of this world's goods to the meek; for a man's life, specially a Christian man's, " consisteth not in the abundance of the things which Luke xii. he possesseth;" but meekness is the way, neverthe- 15. less, to the enjoyment of temporal peace and felicity, inasmuch as from it springs "contentment," 1 Tim. vi. which, "with godliness, is great gain" to the faith-6. ful. So that in the fuller sense, "things present and things to come," are the Christian's; unto whom, 22. meekness is as a garment to clothe himself withal. "Such," says one, "shall be instated in a double Canaan, and after having lived a life of Paradise in this world, shall be translated to heaven in the next, as 'having the promise both of this life, and of that which is to come;' their temporal felicity and 8. quiet they meet with here, being but a type, and earnest, and pledge, and engagement of eternal happiness."

Therefore, as "the Lord will beautify the meek with salvation" and help the "meek hearted," what Ps. cxlix. better preaching than this? "Seek ye the Lord, all P. Book ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judg-Vers.

ment; seek rightcousness, seek MEEKNESS: it may

Zeph. ii. 3. be, ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger."

So found they, at the desolations of Jerusalem, who sought in Pella the city of their refuge; and so shall the Christian find it!

The fourth Beatitude is, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after right-Matt. v. 6. EOUSNESS: FOR THEY SHALL BE FILLED;" or, as it stands in St. Luke, "Blessed are ye that hunger Lukevi. 21. NOW: FOR YE SHALL BE FILLED."

> IV. Nothing so sensibly felt by our weaker natures as extremes of hunger and thirst?. figure, therefore, is easily understood. To hunger and thirst after righteousness is to crave for it as the hungry man does for food, or as he that is parched and dry does to slake his thirst, and the desire is, as we know, intense, earnest, not to be satisfied, except in repletion. Possession is its aim, Then for "righteousness," the its end fruition. sense of the term here is the fulfilment of all duties enjoined of God, in as far forth as they are known to be such; for as our Blessed Lord was speaking to the Jews, they could not as yet have understood the "righteousness of faith," even as we know the very Apostles did not long after, when they asked, " saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again

⁷ Old Latimer understood this in a more literal sense: "I will expound these words thus; they that hunger be they that suffer wrong; for when a man suffereth wrong and injures, he hungereth and thirsteth to know justice, to come to his right."—Vol. i. p. 482.

the kingdom to Israel?" And it is in the sense of Acts i. 6. the term here referred to, that Zacharias and Elisabeth are said to have been "both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless;" as it is elsewhere Luke i. 6. expressed, "In holiness and righteousness before him." Luke i. 75.

But although, in the first instance, the term "righteousness" was restricted, and further even, was opposed to covetousness, the Christian needs not to restrict it. For be it that to him, in one sense, "the law is no more;" yet, in another and a better, Lam. ii. 9. it abideth ever: for the moral law, so to say, is swallowed up in Justification by Faith, which exacts it every tittle, and then, in the counsels of mercy, mantleth and runneth over with the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, notwithstanding the short comings of man, provided his will be conformed to his Lord's, who said, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." So that John iv.34. the exhortation is, whether as respects the righteousness of faith, or the comfort conveyed to us in the creatures of bread and wine, those mighty channels of grace, representing the Lord's body broken, and his blood poured out, "Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed." John vi. 27.

Let only the desire be intense and earnest, keen as hunger, and as thirst burning,—strong and active, as was the desire of our Saviour to celebrate

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the last Passover 8 (" with desire have I desired, έπιθυμία έπεθύμησα, to eat this Passover with you Luke xxii. before I suffer,") and then, in that case, they that do so hunger and so thirst after Righteousness "shall be filled." Yea, though it be "the kingdom of heaven" (as St. Chrysostom says) "that is shadowed out in these sayings," earth too is not excluded. "They who seek the Lord shall want no manner of thing that is Ps. xxxiv. Though the eye be "not satisfied with good." Eccles. i. 8. seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing," they who desire to be good shall be satisfied, and so shall they be happy, for happiness is the natural consequent of goodness. As the wise man said, "The good man Prov. xiv. shall be satisfied from himself." "Such honour have Ps. exlix.9. all his saints." Impressed with these truths, who exclaimeth not, "The Lord is my shepherd, therefore can I lack nothing. He shall find me in a green pasture, and lead me forth beside the waters of com-Ps. xxiii. 1, fort."

The next Beatitude is, "Blessed are the Merci-Matt. v. 7. FUL: FOR THEY SHALL OBTAIN MERCY."

V. So spake the ancient Hebrews, and again our Blessed Lord addressed them in words they would apprehend at once, albeit contrary altogether to the usage of the Pharisees, who said, but did not. On

^a This application is made by Norris of Bemerton, in his Sermons on the Beatitudes, p. 186. ed. 8vo. 1690. Such a desire as Jer. Taylor says would be "right strong and regular—not of a low and terrestrial gust."—p. 453.

⁹ See Schoettg. in loc.

whom then shall we say, this blessing droppeth as the dew of heaven. Certainly, and apart from disputation, the man of pity is one whose bowels yearn towards his brethren, and are stirred within him, at the sight, whether of sin, or of misery, the child of sin. The wants of men's bodies, as well as the infirmities of their souls, touch him to the quick, move him to help and succour, to bring back and to reclaim. Assured, by the power of the Holy Ghost, what the body of Christ is, and that all Christians are members in particular of that body of which Christ is the head, he is thus minded, "That there should be no schism of the body; but

¹ St. Paul in quoting the heathen poets—Epemenides and Aratas—is authority for us to do the like. And if so, who among any of our own ever spake of mercy with more unction than Shakspeare:—

"The quality of mercy is not strain'd;
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath; it is twice bless'd;
It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes;
'Tis mightiest in the mightiest; it becomes
The throned monarch better than his crown;
His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,
The attribute to awe and majesty,
Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings;
But mercy is above this scepter'd sway,
It is enthroned in the hearts of kings,
It is an attribute to God himself;
And earthly power doth these show likest God's
When mercy seasons justice."

Merchant of Venice, Act iv. Sc. 1.

that the members should have the same care one of another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, 1 Cor. xii. all the members rejoice with it." And for this he 25, 26. hath his Saviour's example as well as precept, who was moved with compassion (ἐσπλανχνίσθη) on the Matt. ix. multitudes, even as still, in all our afflictions, He is afflicted, for "we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmi-Heb. iv. 15. ties." And so, the merciful man is often sad at heart, "A MAN OF SORROWS," like his great Master and only Saviour, inasmuch as the miseries of others drink up his spirit, and his sighs are life-wasting, for that their grief is his own.

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But, as saith St. Chrysostom once more, "the way of showing mercy is manifold, and this commandment is broad 2." And hence, the merciful man forgives, as he hopes to be forgiven, and, as mercy is the glorious attribute of the Almighty, who punisheth to the third and fourth generation, but showeth mercy to the thousandth, displayed in the sight of all men by the sending of his only begotten Son to die for sin and for sinners, he thinketh much on those elsewhere words, "Be ye therefore Lukevi. 36, merciful, as your Father also is merciful;" and such, according to the capacities of a creature, is he. Neither, when objects of compassion come in his way, maketh he a difference, as the Jew, by the

² See Schoettg. in loc.

law, was to be merciful to his own nation, and, by tradition, to them only, but he openeth his hand wide, whether to Samaritan or Jew, Scythian or barbarian. As he hath "opportunity" he doeth good, "unto all men, especially unto them who are of the houshold of faith." These words to him are Gal. vi. 10. no vain words, "Whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him." "Remember the words of the Lord 17.

Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive."

The reward is, "they shall obtain mercy." "for a recompense in the same," spoken of as an 13. aντιμισθία, proportion there is none. They themselves show mercy, as men regenerate,-the very doing so, on Christian principles, is the effect of the "engrafted Word,"—and then they obtain mercy as a gift from the God of all! At the great audit of the world it is mercy that "rejoiceth against judgment." Widen or narrow the interpretation thereof 21; ii. 13. as we may, the description of the last judgment, in the twenty-fifth chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel, as the words fell from our dear Lord's own mouth, declare this truth from generation to generation, that the "righteous," who are there all one with those that have showed mercy, shall go away "into life eternal." They shall stand upright in the judg- 46. ment. The Lord, the Judge of all the world, is the Lord their Righteousness!

The next Beatitude is. "BLESSED ARE THE PURE Matt. v. 8. IN HEART: FOR THEY SHALL SEE GOD."

Prov. iv.

Ephes. iv.

VI. Here, by the heart, we are to understand the inward and spiritual part of man, thus addressed, in the Spirit, by Solomon, who had such cause to know its deceitfulness, "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life;" and "the pure in heart" are those whose inclinations to concupiscence are subdued, though the infection remain, and who make a conscience of keeping their heart as a sacred shrine, clear from all unclean offerings, having their thoughts and evil passions brought under, breathing forth, under the influence of grace and truth, "a sweet-smelling sacrifice." Such have "put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and, being renewed in the spirit of their mind, have put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." Wishing to be like God their Saviour in his unsinning humanity, and holding to this hope, they read with comfort, and fashion their lives according to the beloved disciple's words, " Every man that hath this hope in him Purifieth l John iii. himself even as he is pure."

But "who," that is mortal born, "can say, I have made my heart clean, I am PURE from my Prov. xx. 9. sin?" Not one! But, as the gold is pure which is thoroughly cleansed of its dross, and water clear, when the fountain is unstirred, and so, unmixed with grosser particles of earth,—so is a man's heart

pure, when that which is "of the earth earthy," is clarified by the inspiration of God's Holy Spirit, and the inward man delighteth in the law of God, and the pressure from without, hindereth not the running in the way of his commandments, that is to say, in holiness of life and charity with all men; for, as one well says, "purity of heart includes purity of hands,"—and it is one of those great circumstances that consummate charity, for "the end of the commandment is charity, OUT OF A PURE HEART, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned." And 1 Tim. i. 5.

Jer. Taylor. thus we may understand our Saviour's words in a fuller sense, " Now ye are CLEAN through the word which I have spoken unto you," for He it is John xv. 3. "who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and PURIFY unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Tit. ii. 14.

The reward is, "For they shall see God." And how is this? Saith not the Scripture, "No man hath seen God at any time?" that He dwelleth John i. 18. "in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, or can see?" Saith He 16. not unto Moses, of old time, "Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me and live?" Exod. xxxiii. 20. Certainly it is so written; and, therefore, we understand that the reward here consigned to the pure in heart refers to the kingdom of heaven, and to

³ "By our seeing God," says South, "is meant, and under it comprised, the whole enjoyment of the felicities of another life, as by seeing the sun, is set forth the entire, total enjoyment of

what is to be hereafter, when they that are such,— ("perfect through my comeliness which I" have Ezek. xvi. "put on" them, "saith the Lord God,")—shall see 14. 1 Cor. xiii. no more "darkly, but then face to face." Full sure, 12. as Augustine saith, "seeing God is the reward of faith; to which end, our hearts are made pure by Acts xv. 9, faith: as it is written, 'Purifying their hearts by faith." And faith being "the substance of things Aug. Heb. xi. 1. hoped for, the evidence of things not seen," Moses Heb. xi.27. " endured, as seeing him who is invisible." And so doth the very Christian on this side the grave. Glorious things are revealed unto him by the Spirit. His eye glances far, even from earth to heaven, even through the grave and the gate of death to Rev. iv. 3. the "rainbow round about the throne," where that everlasting chaunt is heard, "Holy, Holy, Holy, LORD GOD ALMIGHTY, WHICH WAS, AND IS, AND IS Rev. iv. 8. TO COME."

Then, as in his light we shall see light, who giveth shine unto the world, let us join in the Psalmist's prayer, thus moulded to our hands in the Liturgy of our Church, "O God, make clean our hearts within us, and take not thy Holy Spirit from us!"

The next Beatitude is, "Blessei) ARE THE PEACEMAKERS: FOR THEY SHALL BE CALLED THE Matt. v. 9. CHILDREN OF GOD."

this life," Eccles. vii. 11, &c. See Sermon on this Beatitude, vol. vii. p. 170. See also the excellent one of Beveridge-Works, vol. vi. p. 108, &c. ed. Horne.

VII. And how beautiful a title is this in the midst of worldly tumults, and worldly preparations for the battle! For what else is the world but a battle-field? full often an aceldama,—a "field of blood." Such, at least, is the natural end of those Acts i. 19. "wars and fightings" which originate in "the lusts that war" in the "members" of the unsanctified. James iv. 1

But, the Christian who is pure in heart hath concern only with the blood of Christ that cleanseth from all sin, not with man's blood that crieth from the ground. When such things are, he knoweth Gen. iv. 10. the Word hath not free course; and, in quietness and peace, he looketh to Him that "maketh wars to cease in all the world." And not only so, but, if Ps. xlvi. 9. "it be possible, as much as lieth in him, he liveth peaceably with all men." In fact, and in accordance 18. with what is written in the Scripture of truth, peacemakers are they who, being themselves of a peaceable temper, endeavour to promote peace among others, in this showing themselves likest God, who is "not the author of confusion, BUT OF PEACE, as in all the churches of the saints." Even 33. as we read the apostolic exhortation, "Be of one mind, live in PEACE, and the God of love and PEACE shall be with you." So to live appertaineth to the 11. Christian: for "PEACE" is of the fruit of the Spirit, Gal. v. 22. one token certainly that Christ is "formed" within Gal. iv. 19. us.

Peacemakers ⁴ also are they who preach the ⁴ This is not pressed upon literally, for, as Hammond says,

Gospel of peace, reconciling sinners to Christ, who Ephes. vi. is their PEACE. So far is the Christian temper from 15; ii. 14, and wishing to divide and rule, that "to hold the faith loc. in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life," is its constant aim! "PEACE,

is the watchword of the lowly Nazarene from the Lord. The Prince of Peace is not unto him a Saviour only, but also an ensample of godly life. The early Christmas carol is ever ringing in his ears, which tells, that "suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth Luke ii. 13, PEACE good will toward men:" and it is his chiefest.

Luke ii. 13, PEACE, good will toward men;" and it is his chiefest comfort to recollect the legacy consigned to all the faithful ones in the New Testament, irreversibly Heb. ix. 16, their own since the death of the testator, "Peace 17.

I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your John xiv. heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

The reward of the peacemakers is, "They shall be called;" that is, they shall be, and be owned as, (such being the sense of $\kappa\lambda\eta\theta\dot{\eta}\sigma\sigma\nu\tau\alpha\iota^5$,) "the children of God;" sons of the adoption, and like, in their

in his Practical Catechism, "The word peacemakers signifies no more than peaceable-minded men. The notion of making in Scripture phrase belonging to the bent of the soul; as to make a lie, is, to be given to lying, to practise that sin, to be set upon it," &c. &c. ut supra, p. 34.

^{*} Whitby in loc.

smaller mortal comings, unto Him who is the "PRINCE OF PEACE." And to this holy and heavenly similitude they are led on by that Spirit of grace that worketh within them, being "followers of God as dear children;" loving their Ephes. v. 1. enemies by the way, and doing good to them that hate them. And what greater blessedness than to be the children of God, unlinked from the couplings of the world, "and, if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ;" and, as such, 17. (for "the breaker," as saith Micah the prophet, "is come up before them," their king has passed before, "and the Lord on the head of them,") "the children Rom.ii. 13. of the resurrection." Cometh it not home to each 36. one of us? Sure, full sure, "ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to Rom, viii. wit, the redemption of our body." As one sums up, 23. "The reward is no less than the adoption and inheritance of sons: for 'He hath given unto us power to be called the sons of God;' for He is the Father of peace; and the sons of peace are the sons of God, and, therefore, have a title to the inheritance of sons, to be heirs with God and co-heirs with Christ, in the kingdom of peace, and essential and never-failing charity 6."

Good is the salutation written in St. Paul's own hand, "Now the Lord of peace himself give you

⁶ Jer. Taylor.

peace always, by all means. The Lord be with you ² Thess. iii. all."

The eighth and last Beatitude is, "BLESSED ARE THEY WHICH ARE PERSECUTED FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS' SAKE: FOR THEIR'S IS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, AND PERSECUTE YOU, AND SHALL SAY ALL MANNER Margin, OF EVIL AGAINST YOU FALSELY, FOR MY SAKE. REJOICE, AND BE EXCEEDING GLAD: FOR GREAT IS YOUR REWARD IN HEAVEN: FOR SO PERSECUTED Matt. v. 10 -12 THEY THE PROPHETS WHICH WERE BEFORE YOU:" or, as it stands in St. Luke, "Blessed are ye. WHEN MEN SHALL HATE YOU, AND WHEN THEY SHALL SEPARATE YOU FROM THEIR COMPANY, AND SHALL REPROACH YOU, AND CAST OUT YOUR NAME AS EVIL, FOR THE SON OF MAN'S SAKE. REJOICE YE IN THAT DAY, AND LEAP FOR JOY: FOR, BEHOLD, YOUR REWARD IS GREAT IN HEAVEN: FOR IN THE LIKE MANNER DID THEIR FATHERS UNTO THE PRO-Luke vi. 22. PHETS 7." 23.

' See Farindon's Sermon on this Beatitude. He says, "it is the seal and ratification of the rest; an argument, a protestation, a demonstration, that the rest were in us of a truth," &c. Serm. vol. ii. p. 695. The passage from St. Bernard is quoted by him.

Keble says in his Sermon "Counsels of Perfection," pretty much what Hammond does on the Order of the Beatitudes. "They begin and end with the kingdom of heaven, but it is assigned in the first instance to the poor in spirit, and not till other kindred virtues and graces have been mentioned, such as meekness, peace-making, purity of heart, is the same blessing

VIII. As the whole world liveth in wickedness. and, as such, is set against the righteous, thereby rendering their lot hard, and bestrewing their path with "briers and thorns," and assigning them their dwelling "among scorpions," so is their estate Ezek, ii. 6. ushered in with a double blessing. But, at the same time, this double blessing implies, that Christians were not to consider suffering "a strange thing." Persecution for Christ's, or for righteous- 12. ness' sake, is the inheritance of those that shall be "saints in light;" not always, and of necessity, but Col. i. 12. most or oftentimes. They shall bear their cross, as did their Lord and Master, and their ascent heavenward shall be by the mount of sorrows on earth, and their reward is sure. "It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: if we suffer, we shall also reign with him." 2 Tim. ii. If so be we suffer with Him, our hope is we shall Rom. viii. be "glorified together."

Without referring to that special state of dignity

pronounced upon suffering for righteousness' sake. Not till these humble and quiet dispositions have been commended, which belong alike to all times and circumstances, is any thing said in praise of what may be called the heroic virtues of a Christian; affliction, scorn, and calumny endured for Christ's sake. Surely this is a significant circumstance, and much to be considered by all who may have made any sacrifice for Christ, or may think they find in themselves the heart to do so. They are not to be satisfied with themselves till their humility and charity have been tried as well as their self-denial."—p. 278.

assigned by holy men of old to that mighty army of martyrs whose blood was as the seed-plot of the Church, something there is, something there will ever be, in filling up what is behind of our Redeemer's sufferings, which brings us onwards "to Ephes, iv. the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." "No man should be moved by these afflictions, for," as St. Paul said to the Church at Thessalonica, l Thess. iii. "yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto." Remember the word that the Lord Jesus said unto those He loved so well: "The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will John xv. also persecute you." That record of old " must pro-20. phesy again before many peoples, and nations, and Rev. x. 11. tongues, and kings." Even in Christian times and John xv. in the last days, "they hated me without a cause." Christ Himself was "made perfect through suffer-Heb. ii. 10. ings," and so, in their capacity, shall his followers "Reproaches and afflictions" are a Christian Heb. x. 33. be. heir-loom.

But here, it must be rightly understood, that mere suffering, in and by itself, is not of necessity "blessed," it may be even the reverse; but the blessing is their inheritance who suffer "ψευδόμενοι " falsely, and for Christ's sake; for, as St. Chrysostom

^{* &}quot;Those words contain a restraint or limitation of the subject to this purpose, that the Beatitudes belong not to those indefinitely that are persecuted and reviled, &c., but to those particularly who are true Christians."—See Hammond's Practical Catechism, ut supra, p. 35.

saith, without this distinction, "he, who is evil spoken of, so far from being blessed, is miserable 1;" and, not without a purpose, "St. Cyprian observes, that our Blessed Lord, in admitting the innocent babes of Bethlehem first to die for Him, did, to all generations of Christendom, consign this lesson, that only persons holy and innocent were fit to be Christ's martyrs'." But all whose robes, like theirs, are washed in the blood of the Lamb, are participators in the sacredness of suffering, and, having Mark x.30, had their possession here, "with persecutions," at μῦν. the end of the days they shall leave tribulation behind, and stand "before the throne of God, and Rev. vii. serve him day and night in his temple." The Lamb 14, 15. which is in the midst of the throne, in his salvifick presence, shall be their exceeding great reward. That ancient father spake not in vain, "Agnosco HÆREDITATEM MEAM IN CRUCE 3."

Thus guarded, and stated with these limitations, suffering is a sacred estate, and there seems a voice from behind to arrest the ear, and to admonish each "chosen vessel," as it were, in those words spoken unto Ananias, of Paul; "I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake." But on Acta x. 16. this head, St. Peter's words, on two several occasions, supersede all other remarks. "This is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if,

¹ In loc. Hom. xv. ² Jer. Taylor in loc.

³ Bernard.

when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For

even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: who did no sin, neither was quile found in his mouth: who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously." And again, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busy-

l Pet. iv. 12—16.

l Pet. ii.

19-23.

Who, then, beleagured as the world is with sin and suffering, saith not, in his profitable times of humiliation, God's will be done? Who, even at such a time, saith not, let us up and be doing; let us follow their example who "departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were Acts v. 41. counted worthy to suffer shame for his name." The

body in other men's matters. Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him

glorify God on this behalf."

Scripture coupleth together "the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings." This Phil. iii. 10. let us well remember, and, having obtained help of God, lest we fall, as did Peter, let us not refuse to "drink of the brook in the way," the bitter waters of affliction—that HE, the "MAN OF SOR-Rows," may lift up our heads at the last. This, if Ps. ex. 7. we do, we shall find St. Paul's reckoning right, "that the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us;" and so, neither "tribulation, or distress, Rom. viii. or persecution—shall be able to separate us from the Rom. viii. love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

The natural prayer,—the desire of our lips,—will be in the words of the Collect for St. Stephen's day: "Grant, O Lord, that in all our sufferings here upon earth, for the testimony of thy truth, we may stedfastly look up to heaven, and by faith behold the glory that shall be revealed; and being filled with the Holy Ghost, may learn to love and bless our persecutors, by the example of thy first martyr, St. Stephen, who prayed for his murderers to thee, O blessed Jesus, who standest at the right hand of God to succour all those that suffer for thee, our only Mediator and Advocate 4."

And thus have I taken upon me, in simpler words than might at all times befit an Academic Pulpit, to urge, from this Holy Sermon, (called by

⁴ Coll. St. Stephen's day.

a great Divine⁵, sometime of this place, but now

with God, "the fundamental charter by which the kingdom of heaven here on earth is established,") the uncontroversial preaching of the parochial clergy. For herein, if any where, this truth is eminently taught, that "God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of Acts iii. 26. you from his iniquities:" this great truth, which should stand at the head and front of every discourse which is to find the hearts of our hearers. and to convert souls unto Christ. Nothing but "Christ crucified" and risen "again for our justification," by the power of the Holy Ghost, is effectual to this end. Without it, our hearers leave us hungry and thirsty, and faint by the way! Then doth our "doctrine drop as the rain, our speech distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass:" when we "publish the name of the Lord, and ascribe greatness unto Deut.xxxii. our God;" showing how He "delighteth in mercy," 2, 3. and "waiteth to be gracious;" and how his Christ " was made sin for us, that we might be made 2 Cor. v. the righteousness of God in him." 21. Not that it is intended that the parochial clergy

Not that it is intended that the parochial clergy should hold their tongues on meet and fit occasions. On the contrary, the bulwarks of our faith and doctrine are to be their especial and constant care, and

⁵ See Thomas Jackson's Works, vol. ii. p. 535, folio ed. He was of Corpus Christi College. His works are now reprinted at the Clarendon press.

whenever we shall have an unlearned, then shall we have, exceptis excipiendis, an inefficient ministry. The history of bygone days, in this our land, is pregnant with mighty lessons on this head. The rather, the better stored the minds of our clergy, the better will they be enabled to bring forth things "new and old," for the edification of their hearers. more ready they are with the deeper doctrines and the more subtle controversies of the Christian Church, the more ready will they be to declare the simple "truth as it is in Jesus," unentangled and unravelled from the sophistry, whether of the schoolmen or of captious sciolists. Let this be instanced in the invaluable sermons of the profoundly learned Beveridge,—of that good divine, the late Bishop Van Mildert, and in those of the apostolic Bishop Wilson, whose name must be held in honour, " if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise." Phil. iv. 8. The inference is, that religious and useful learning can never be too abundant; but that when we speak unto the skirts, as it were, of the congregation, we must beware lest we speak "in a tongue not understanded of the people." With the gene-Art. xxiv. rality controversies are but as husks,-once alive to religious truth, they thirst for the water of life, and hunger for the bread of life. Therefore, let full and competent knowledge pour forth holy doctrine, without noise and without clamour, and let us apply, in a wider sense, what we read of, relative to the building of Solomon's temple, "And the

house, when it was in building, was built of stone
MADE READY BEFORE IT WAS BROUGHT THITHER; so
that there was neither hammer nor axe nor any tool

1 Kings vi. of iron heard in the house, while it was in building."

It is quiet teaching and living which tends to the
edification, that is, to the building up of the
Christian man. As one doth beautifully say,
"Many times God is present in the still voice and
private retirements of a quiet religion, and the constant spiritualities of an ordinary life; when the
loud and impetuous winds, and the shining fires and
more laborious and expensive actions, are profitable
to others only, like a tree of balsam, distilling precious liquor for others, not for its own use 6."

I will add, that so far from intending to do down with that studiousness which should be the characteristic of the Christian clergy, and to which they are pledged by their ordination vows, my belief is, that deep-rooted learning and skill in controversy (so it be to Godwards) was never more needed. We need to buckle on our spiritual armour, and to pray for a sword of heavenly temper, wherewith to fight the battles of the Lord. Unless we read amiss the signs of the times, that contest with the Church of Rome and with the Puritan, which has

⁶ See Jer. Taylor's Considerations upon the Annunciation and Conception of Jesus. Works, vol. ii. p. 9. ed. Heber.

⁷ Never have these points been set forth so forcibly as by South, in his bitter but marvellous sermons. His common saying was, that "all Separatists and Dissenters were the Pope's

loomed in the offing these twenty years, is now taking a shape more definite, and day by day is drawing nigher and nigher. Some, may be, yet may have to utter these, or other like words, and to pray that their faith fail not. Έγκειμένου δὲ τοῦ ἡγουμένου, καὶ λέγουτος, "Ομοσον, καὶ ἀπολύσω σε Λοιδόρησου τὸν Χριστὸν, ἔφη ὁ Πολύκαρπος, "Ογδοήκουτα καὶ ἔξ ἔτη δουλεύω αὐτῷ, καὶ οὐδέν με ἠδίκησε καὶ πῶς

Journeymen"—e. g. vol. iv. p. 186. They never forgave his sermons on Isaiah v. 20; nor these words in his sermon on Gal. ii. 5:

"It was an observation and saying of a judicious prelate, that of all sorts of enemies which our Church has, there was none so deadly, so pernicious, and so likely to prove fatal to it, as the conforming Puritan. It was a great truth, and not very many years after ratified by direful experience. For if you would have the conforming Puritan described, as to what he is,

"He is one who lives by the altar, and turns his back upon it; one who catches at," &c. &c. Vol. iv. p. 192. Those lines of Phineas Fletcher's in his "Purple Island" will apply to the often combination of Papist and Puritan. Of the way in which extremes meet—"Foxes and Firebrands"—I could recount some extraordinary instances from "Parochial experience." The lines alluded to are:—

"So by the Bosporus' straits, in Euxine seas,
Not far from old Byzantium, closely stand
Two neighbour islands, call'd Symplegades,
Which sometime seem but one combined land:
For often meeting on the watery plain,
And parting oft, tost by the boist'rous main,
They now are join'd in one, and now disjoin'd again."

Canto III.

δύναμαι βλασφημήσαι τον βασιλέα μου, τον σώσαντά με 8;

I have detained you over long, but I had these truths to utter, which another might have done more forcibly, but none more faithfully. The Lord stand by us, and strengthen us in the day of trial, that, like Paul, we may be "delivered out of the mouth of the lion." There are subtler temptations on our right hand and on our left. "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."

2 Tim. iv.

Col. iii. 12

-17.

17.

⁸ Euseb. Hist. Eccles. iv. 15.

THE END.

The New Temple:

The Beloved Son, in whom God is well pleased.

A SERMON,

PREACHED AT STRATFORD-ON-AVON,

AT THE

VISITATION OF THE LORD BISHOP OF WORCESTER,

AUGUST 2ND, 1848.

BY THE

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VICAR OF ST. NICHOLAS, WARWICK, AND DOMESTIC CHAPLAIN TO THE COUNTESS OF WARWICK.

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1848.

I			
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MY BRETHREN IN CHRIST,

Ministers of the New Cemple,

AND TO

ALL WORSHIPPING IN THE SAME,

THIS SERMON

IS,

WITH MUCH AFFECTION AND HUMILITY,
DEDICATED.



The New Temple.

MATTHEW xvii., 5.

"And while he yet spake, behold a bright cloud overshadowed them, and behold a voice out of the cloud which said, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, Hear ye Him."

Twelve lowly-born, humble dependents on Him whom they called "master," and He, to human eye, as poverty-stricken as themselves, needed something more than a bare declaration, that "in the Father's house" were "many mansions," and at "his right hand pleasures for evermore." Sympathizing with creature doubts, and knowing "whereof we are made," that Master vouchsafed a glimpse of the glory which shall be—as much as humanity could stand—to Peter, James, and John; and, in the

transfiguration recorded in this chapter, we behold the wonderful condescension of Jesus, to "settle" "ground" and "stablish" the faith of His followers.

Of the amazing wonders of that event it is not intended to speak; for it would be impossible even to condense them, into anything like compass, for the occasion which brings my Reverend hearers together; but, in order to help in the elucidation of the text, it will be necessary to glance at their principal features.

It would seem, from the concluding verse of the preceding chapter, that Jesus had intimated to His Disciples, that there were some standing around Him, at that moment, who should not "taste of death until they saw the Son of man coming in His kingdom;" and, in less than a week, that declaration was fulfilled: for, "after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John, and bringeth them up into an exceeding high mountain, apart, and was transfigured before them, and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the

light, and behold there appeared Moses and Elias talking with Him."

We are warranted in believing, that, in the glorious change on the countenance and raiment of their Master, the Disciples beheld a small portion of that transcendent glory which He has now assumed in His kingdom above; and then saw, with the natural eye, the realization of a grand truth they were soon to declare, that "this mortal shall put on immortality;" and, in the presence of Moses and Elias,—the one who saw death and was buried, the other caught up without death,—they learnt an article of their future "Creed," which enabled them to assert their belief in the resurrection of "quick and dead."

Thus arrayed in glory, stood the Lawgiver Moses and the Prophet Elias, respectively representing "the Law" and "the Prophets," talking with Jehovah-Jesus on the decease He should accomplish at Jerusalem; and at this juncture, as the Heavens opened and the glorified three were communing together, "behold

a bright cloud over-shadowed them, and behold a voice out of the cloud which said, THIS IS MY BELOVED SON IN WHOM I AM WELL PLEASED, HEAR YE HIM." In Spirit, try to behold this goodly scene; go back in thought to Moses and his mission; call to mind Elias the prophet and his labour: meditate on their joint work: and then the words of the text will bring before us, as into focus, the consummation of that mighty scheme, which was concerted in Heaven to be completed on earth, and which the scene in this chapter was designed to illustrate: the voice, as it were, declaring the meaning of the whole, when it said, "This is my beloved Son, hear ye Him." Moses and Elias (the Law and the Prophets), "were until John:" they must decrease into shadow as Jesus comes forth. "Hear ve Him."

Our text sets before us-

- I. The "Beloved Son."
- II. The Dedication by "a voice from Heaven."
- III. The Command concerning Him, "Hear ye Him."

I. The "Beloved Son."

How full of import is this expression, containing within its embrace the whole history of the family of man. In the way of contrast, how forcibly it takes us back to the events in Paradise: it exhibits to us the CURSED SON, withering under the wrath of God, shrinking from Jehovah's presence,—an outcast from a Father's love. It discloses to us the awful gap between Creator and creature: it portrays the degradation, the gloom, and the wickedness of the one man "(Adam) through whom (or in whom) all have sinned:" gaze, I pray you, on this representative of the human race: well is it, to catch him as it were, just as he became conscious of sin and its heinousness. at the very moment Satan's prophecy concerning him was being fulfilled,-" ye shall be as Gods, knowing good and evil,"—when the depth of his fall had stricken him, and the Lord's voice calling in the garden fell on his ear: watch the image of God departing from him, and the superscription of his new parent, Satan, working into body, soul and spirit: Oh, where shall he hide,—whither can he flee? For the gaze of Jehovah is scorching; the joy in His presence has departed; the sweet communion is cut off, and lo! there stands the DESPAIRING SINNER.

2. It sets forth Man's Hope.

As, with desponding eye, the guilty pair await their doom,—as the ministering Cherubim take up their station to guard the precincts of the lovely garden,—as Jehovah comes forth to pronounce their sentence, MERCY rushes to greet TRUTH, and RIGHTEOUSNESS to embrace PEACE; and then, from the depths of eternity, is brought out that mystery which angels longed to know; and, ere ever the mother of earth's children learns her sorrow, or the man the earth's curse, in the woe on their tempter they read their pardon,—for the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head, and this, THE "BELOVED SON."

3. It sets forth the completeness of Man's hope. If I might so speak, the human race were con-

centrated before God in Adam, and in Adam's loins were cursed.

In the marriage of Adam, we have a great mystery revealed, a mysterious union declared. God's eye, as it ranges over the children of men, rests only on Adam their father, and in Adam they are "dead" in His sight. If I stand before God, it is in Adam, and in Adam I am cursed; for thus saith Scripture, "as by ONE MAN sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so death passed upon all men, for that ALL have sinned, yea death reigned over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression: "-which we might render thus, "by the disobedience of one who stood before God as our representative, sin was introduced into the world, and in consequence of sin came Death, and by this man, has death (or God's curse) been handed to all men, on account of whom, all have been treated as sinners, and this taint is even handed to Infants, though they were never guilty of personal sin."

But, when the "beloved Son" was promised

as the seed of the woman, who, by another mysterious union, typified by Adam's marriage, should bring in a flood of righteousness,—then is the darkness of despair chased by a ray of hope, for in that seed, man looked for pardon and peace, and is supported by the assurance, that though "by the offence of one man judgment came upon all men unto condemnation," yet "by the righteousness of one man the free gift came upon all men,"—and that gift in the "beloved Son."

4. It sets forth, the Father's pleasure and Man's acceptance,—"This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."

In this is revealed the mystical union betwixt Christ and His Church.

There are two Churches and two Heads presented to God's view: there is the Church of Adam under sin, and the Church of the "beloved Son" under righteousness. And as, in the one, God is displeased and its members under wrath, so in the other, God is "well pleased"

and its members under grace; for, in the fulness of time, God sent forth His beloved Son, made of a woman, made under the law to redeem them under its curse, and on Calvary did the rain of heaven descend, and the storm beat on the second Adam; then was the wall broken down and the gulph filled up; then was a way of access prepared and the wrath dispelled; then from the bosom of the "beloved Son," Adam's child could once more cry "Abba, Father."

Magnificent plan! "Through Faith," (and that very faith God's gift,) the sinner becomes partaker of the righteousness and perfect work of his new parent; by Faith he is grafted into the mystical body of Christ;—for, after the will of the flesh, he was begotten of Adam, but, by the Spirit, is begotten of God;—and thus, being united by faith to Christ, he dies with Him, is buried with Him, and rises again with Him. Wonderful as it may seem, God looks on the believing son of Adam and the "beloved Son" as one person; and to borrow the language of another "he" (the believer,) "obeys in Christ's

obedience—he suffers in Christ's death—he is buried in Christ's grave—and conquers in Christ's victory."

Oh, glorious truth! How completely is brought to my comprehension the depth of Christ's meaning, when he speaks of the union between Him and His people,—"I in them and they in me;" how completely do I see why marriage is represented by our Church, as typical of the "mystical union betwixt Christ and His Church;" and why, at the Lord's Table, she assures the faithful recipients that they "dwell in Christ and Christ in them," "that they are one with Christ and Christ with them;" for the key to the whole is before me in the text, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."

II. Our second subject for consideration is The Dedication, which the scene before us represents.

Henceforth is this plan for man's restoration continually set before his.eyes. Quickly do our first parents discover their nakedness, but, as quickly, is provision made for their clothing; and in the very covering provided, (the skins of animals,) is brought to their remembrance the death of a victim, even "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

"And Adam knew his wife, and she conceived and bare Cain and said, I have gotten a man from the Lord," or as it might be rendered, "I have gotten a man—the Lord."

In that birth she looked for "the beloved Son;" but in that birth had bitter proof that she had handed to her offspring that direful taint which should mark, as with a brand, the last of the human family.

Behold the first worship recorded: behold the two worshippers approach their Maker. The first-born, Cain, presents the first fruits of the earth:—with self-satisfied eye he seems to say "these flowers have gotten their bloom from Thy smile, and these fruits their ripeness from Thy warmth; I will wreathe round Thy brow a diadem of flowers,—but no more; I acknowledge no sin, I see no curse; all seems bright and smiling; take that thine is."

Thus worshipped Cain.

Abel, his brother, found nothing that he could bring as an acceptable offering; he saw that the blight of the curse and the taint of sin had fallen on all nature. But he was made to see God's pleasure in the "beloved Son;" and he brings of the firstlings of his flock, and, reeking in its blood, he lays it on the altar; and connecting it with the promise made to Adam his father, "by faith he offered a more excellent sacrifice."

Such worship as that of Cain is a black mark in all churches; it is the way of Reason, and by Jude is called "the way of Cain:" the worship of Abel is the way of Revelation, and is designated "the more excellent way."

2. To Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, were the promises more explicit,—"In thee and in

thy seed shall all families of the earth be blessed;" and as sinners increased and sin abounded, the nation through whom the "beloved Son" shall come, is gathered from among men.

Israel is the chosen seed, and around her is built a wall of ordinances to keep her intact from the abominations that encircled: to Israel is transmitted an elaborate ceremonial, each item of which should convince of sin and lead to the Fountain.

From heaven, midst thunderings, Moses, the servant of the Most High, received the Law, "Do this and Live, infringe it and Die;"—but, with the same, comes the way for the sinner's justification: an Ark must be made, its minutest detail explained, and "over it, the mercy seat," where God would always be found; and around it, is set up "the tabernacle," which grasped within its broad folds the two attributes of heaven, "mercy and truth;"—In the Law, see Justice: In the ark, the hope of eternal life, and that life in the "beloved Son."

3. Thenceforth did the prophetic trumpet herald yet more clearly.

When Israel's sword was sheathed and peace had crowned her efforts, a resting place for the ark must be found;—a Solomon comes forth directed of the Lord, and soon is erected that glorious building, "made with hands," the wonder of the world.

Time would fail to speak of the magnificence of the pile, the materials of which it was constructed, or the detail of its plan: suffice it to say, that once more, yet more pointedly, in that glorious work was exhibited the "beloved Son."

In that gorgeous temple was set forth in all the loveliness of grace—in all the beauty of holiness—in all the perfection of God and man—Jesus the Christ.

Climb up to the top of its sculptured pinnacles; let the eye gloat on its gorgeous ceiling; walk round its towers; survey its architectural wonders; try measure its courts; total the weight of its gold; sound the depth of its laver; and, as a wonderful whole, stand still in amazement, and there see the grand type of Him who should redeem Israel.

4. And now, notice its dedication, with special reference to the scene presented in the text, as recorded in 1 Kings, vii. and viii:

"So was ended all the work that king Solomon made for the house of the Lord. Then Solomon assembled the Elders of Israel, and all the heads of the Tribes, and the chief of the fathers of the children of Israel, unto king Solomon, in Jerusalem, that they might bring up the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord out of the city of David, which is Zion. And they brought up the Ark of the Lord, and the Tabernacle, and all the holy Vessels that were in the Tabernacle, even those did the Priests and Levites bring up. And king Solomon, and all the congregation of Israel were with him before the Ark, sacrificing sheep and oxen that could not be told nor numbered for multitude."

Then follows a minute account of the deposition of the Ark in "the most holy place," and a declaration that "there was nothing in the Ark save the two tables of stone, which Moses put there at Horeb."

"And it came to pass when the Priests were come out of the holy place, that the cloud filled the house of And Solomon stood before the altar of the Lord, in the presence of the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands towards heaven; and he said, Lord God of Israel, there is no God like thee in heaven above or on earth beneath, who keepest covenant and mercy with thy servants that walk before thee with all their And now, O God of Israel, let thy word I pray thee be verified which thou spakest unto thy servant But will God indeed dwell on earth. David, my father. Behold the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee, how much less this house that I have builded. Yet have thou respect unto the prayer of thy servant, and to his supplications, O Lord my God, to hearken unto the cry and to the prayer which thy servant prayeth before thee to-day, that thine eyes may be open toward this house night and day; even toward the place of which thou hast said, My name shall be there, that thou mayest hearken unto the prayer which thy servant shall make toward this place."

Then follows Solomon's special request.

"If any man trespass against his neighbour, and an oath be laid upon him to cause him to swear, and the oath come before thine altar in this house—then hear thou in heaven and do.

"When thy people Israel be smitten down before the

enemy, because they have sinned against thee, and shall turn again to thee and confess thy name, and pray and make supplication unto thee in this house, then hear thou in Heaven and forgive the sin of Thy people.

"When Heaven is shut up and there is no rain because they have sinned against Thee—if they pray toward this place and confess thy name and turn from their sin—then hear thou in Heaven and forgive the sin of Thy servants and of Thy people Israel.

"If there be in the land famine—if there be pestilence, blasting, mildew, locust; or if there be caterpillar, if their enemy besiege them in the land of their cities, whatsoever plague, whatsoever sickness there be; what prayer and supplication soever be made by any man, or by all thy people Israel, which shall know every man the plague of his own heart, and spread forth his hands toward this house, then hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place and forgive and do.

If thy people go out to battle against their enemy, whithersoever thou shalt send them, and shall pray unto the Lord toward the city which thou hast chosen, and toward the house that I have built for thy name; then hear thou in heaven their prayer and supplication, and maintain their cause.

If they sin against thee (for there is no man that sinneth not) and thou be angry with them, and deliver them to the enemy, so that they carry them away captives

unto the land of their enemy, far or near; yet if they shall bethink themselves, in the land whither they were carried captives, and repent, and make supplication unto thee in the land of them that carried them captives, saying, we have sinned, and so return unto thee with all their heart, in the land of their enemies which led them away captive, and pray unto thee toward their land which thou gavest unto their fathers, the city which thou hast chosen and the house which I have built for thy name; then hear thou their prayer and their supplication in heaven thy dwelling place, and maintain their cause, and forgive thy people."

Thus prayed the King.

And now notice the reply vouchsafed, to be found in the 9th chapter.

"The Lord appeared to Solomon the second time, as he had appeared unto him at Gibeon. And the Lord said, I have heard thy prayer and supplication which thou hast made before me: I have hallowed this house which thou hast built to put my name there for ever, and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually."

Then follows, as we gather from 2 Chronicles, viii., a categorical answer to the prayer Solomon offered.

"If I shut up heaven that there be no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send

pestilence among my people. If my people which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land. Now mine eyes shall be open, and mine ears attent unto the prayer that is made in this place, for now have I chosen and sanctified this house, that my name may be there for ever."

Why, why, must the sinner repent toward this house? Why, oh why, must prayer be made in this house? Why must the sorrowing captive, an exile from all he holds dear, why must he, in a foreign land, cast his eye toward this city and toward this house? Why is he thus expressly enjoined? Why not repent elsewhere? Why not pray,-why not look elsewhere? Because, "without shedding of blood there is no remission of sin,"—there was no other way of access to the Father but through the place where sacrifice was wont to be made; for, by that sacrifice, at the temple in Jerusalem, was typified "the blood of the Lamb;" on that altar was set forth daily, Him, who, by His precious blood-shedding, should destroy "the enmity," and make an atonement for the sins of many; that they, who were "sometime afar off," might be "made nigh by the blood of Christ:"—hence, God's delight in that House: here was it that He loved to dwell; for there was and is "no other name under heaven whereby we must be saved:" there was and is no other foundation but that "laid in Zion:" there was and is no other way to the "mercy seat," save through Him who is "the way, the truth and the life:" and who is this,—but the beloved son in whom God is well pleased.

To the Temple hastening, might be seen the joyous throng, going up to Jerusalem for to worship. In the Temple might be found the prodigal returned. Toward the Temple does the pining captive direct his eager gaze, as he pours out his prayer in the name of Him, for whom the Temple stood.

And now, I pray you, examine the picture set before us in the vision the text reveals. See the Lawgiver on one side, the Prophet on the other;—why these worthies of old? why

Moses and Elias? why not Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob? why not Solomon or David the King? Reverend Sirs, a grand truth has here to be revealed. Behold this glorious scene, mark its lovely hue, gaze on the heavens opened! In the foreground, recognize the glorified three: on the right hand, stands Moses, grasping the Law; on the left, Elias, as one of the Prophets; in the centre, conspicuous, He, of whom both Moses and the Prophets spake. Watch their earnestness; let their converse fall on your ear;—"they spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem," for, "thus it behoved Christ to suffer," that He might fulfil the law.

And now, at this solemn moment, all heaven is "attent," for the office of Moses and the Prophet is no more, as He, of whom they spake, comes forth: and as, in a dissolving view, the scene, on which the eye has rested, is swallowed up of another; so, now may be seen the rent in the veil, the fracture of the stately pillars, the bowing of the lofty

pinnacles, the cracking of the deep-set walls, the disappearance of the noble dome,—as the NEW TEMPLE, "not made with hands," stands out,—as the living Temple, "eternal in the heavens" makes its appearance! Then do Moses and Elias resign their office; then all heaven bursts into praise; then does Jehovah the Father dedicate Jehovah the Son, and Jehovah the Spirit light on Him, "in the form of a dove;" a voice from heaven declaring, "this is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."

Thus is "THE NEW TEMPLE" dedicated: thus is the divine purpose accomplished: and henceforth it should come to pass, that "whosoever will, may take of the waters of life freely,"—the weary traveller in the ways of sin—the hoary-headed sinner or the youthful prodigal—all, all are welcome, for it is written, "I am the way, the truth, and the life, no man cometh to the Father but by me, and whosoever cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out."

In a few years is the temple of Solomon level

with the ground, a ploughshare passing o'er its site: then is fulfilled the Saviour's announcement to her of Samaria, that "the hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father: but the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him:"* and henceforth, whereever, north, south, east or west, "two or three are gathered together in His name, there will He be in the midst of them:" wherever and whenever, a sinner, moved by the Holy Ghost, should feel sin and come up to the fountain opened in the New Temple, there should be "full, perfect and sufficient satisfaction,"—for, "a new and living way" has been established, and that, through the "beloved Son, in whom God is well pleased."

III. And now lastly, what says "the voice?" This is my beloved Son, Hear yeHim. "This is He that came by water and * John iv., 21.

blood; this is He that came by the Holy Ghost and shedding of blood; and the Spirit beareth witness, and this is the record, that God hath *given* us eternal life and this life is in His Son."

"Hear ye Him." This, then, is the Command concerning Him:—

And they that companied with Him obeyed it; for, on His ascension, began they to teach and to preach Jesus, commencing at Jerusalem: and with such effect did the Holy Ghost apply their testimony, that thousands "were added to the Church daily, of such as should be saved." And so has it been in all ages, under the new covenant; that where and when a crucified Saviour has been lifted up to the sinner's gaze, -the Holy Ghost working with it,—whether in India or Africa by our Missionaries, whether in the lovely village or crowded town by ourselves,—then has there been such a moving of "the dry bones," such life among dead sinners, such addition to the Church of Christ, that the joy in Heaven has abounded, as there was to

be seen, the "lively stones," hewn by the Spirit, in the hands of the master-builder, placed on "the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone: in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord; in whom they are builded together for an habitation of God, through the Spirit."

Oh, what a building, what a temple is this! What size; what comprehensiveness! What completeness! "Not made with hands"—not a material building,—but a living temple, made up of Jesus and living believers.

Reverend brethren, it is of this Temple we are ministers under the new covenant, the *Mosaic* covenant having been found insufficient: "for if it had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for a second; but finding fault with the first covenant, God saith, behold the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and house of Judah, not according to the covenant I made with their

fathers. In that He saith a new covenant; He hath made the first old; now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away."*

As the Ministry of this new covenant, as the Priesthood of the new temple, the injunction "Hear ye Him" contains the spirit of our instructions.

On this solemn gathering, therefore, and in the presence of God, let our consciences declare how we have discharged our sacred calling.

Need I trace with you the proportions of this Temple? yet who is equal to the task! Walk through, I pray you, the courts of this House where God delights to dwell; scan the length and depth, the height and breadth of the love of Jesus; survey the magnitude and freeness of His salvation; the number of His graces, the beauty of His gifts, the splendour of His promises, the grandeur of His sacrifice, the wonders of His resurrection and ascension, the strength of His intercession, and the glory

^{*} Heb. vii., 7-18

of His "coming again:" from these learn somewhat of "the fulness" that is in Christ Jesus.

Like John, "called of God," we are witnesses for "the truth as it is in Jesus." Have our views of Him been clear and defined? Have we faithfully set Him forth as the only name under heaven whereby men must be saved? Or have our statements to our flocks, concerning Him, been meagre and bare? Have we been tempted to place anything between Christ and our people, whereby men should look from Him, and thus make shipwreck of their souls? Are we yet grovelling with the "beggarly elements," and no further advanced than Moses and the prophets? Are we clutching with tenacious grasp the old covenant and its ceremonial, still worshipping at Jerusalem, and attempting, like the Jew of old, the restoration of its temple? Solemn, indeed, are such questions.

2. What say our ministrations? Are we preaching ourselves? Are we magnifying the servant at the expense of the Master, and,

thereby, robbing Him of whom we testify? "He must increase, I must decrease," cries the Baptist John. Oh, how forcibly are we taught that Jesus must be the alpha and omega of our teaching; that we must determine to know nothing among our people, save Christ and Him crucified. "Oh, Reverend Sirs, take heed unto yourselves and unto the doctrine" lest, by an undue elevation of your office, ye throw a veil over Him, of whom ye testify; for Christ hath said, "and I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me."

3. But, to preach Jesus, we must know Him, we must feel Him; unless our hearts are moved to feel that this is He of whom Moses and the Prophets spake, we can never preach Him.

Do we know Him experimentally? Have we verily and indeed tasted that the Lord is gracious? Have we, in our own souls, realized the greatness of His salvation?

If we, by the Holy Spirit, have been made to deplore sin, and then by the same spirit

have been led to the Cross, then, and only then, shall we preach Jesus. Without this, our preaching will be cold and lifeless; our teaching will be dull and heavy; we shall be mere automatons,—insensible pieces of machinery. I ask, can there be an object more pitiable to behold, than him who proclaimeth "ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters;" and yet has himself never drank at the fountain head: how mournful to see the hand uplifted, the eye upturned, the lips labouring to convey a sentiment: but sad, sad the effort; for the heart is unmoved. untouched, is dead to the beauties of Jesus: and hence, there is heard but the "sounding brass" or the "tinkling cymbal."

To know Jesus, is the secret of preaching Him; for "out of the fulness of the heart, the mouth speaketh." Oh, if our hearts condemn us, read in this our lack of effect.

4. "Hear ye Him." This sets forth our duties. Do our life and conversation agree with our message; are we living "as becometh

the Gospel?" are we "epistles known and read of all men?" "does our profiting appear unto all?" have we the "mind that was also in Christ Jesus?" if not, we had better be silent: good for us were it, had we never entered the ministry. How much blood may be upon us, how many souls may have been destroyed by our want of conformity to the image of Christ? Brethren, we are slow to imagine how sensitive are our people, how quick to perceive the disagreement between our teaching and life: we may preach like angels; we may set forth a Saviour's love with the the power of an Apollos; we may range ourselves on the Lord's side, and take part with his people; but if we show not by our lives that we are indeed influenced by the love of Jesus, our preaching is in vain. Oh 'tis not only from the pulpit we must cry "Hear ye Him;" but by our consistent walk; in the detail of our every-day life; at home, in our families; in the steady carrying out our domestic duties; in our buying and selling; in

our promises and their fulfilment; in our going out and coming in; in these we must live Christ; and then shall men say of us, "now we know that these are Christ's disciples;" for not only "their speech," but their life and conversation "agree thereto."

5. And if we would have our message brought home; if we would see sinners moved; if the "Hear ye Him" shall be effectual; we must pray for it. He is the most effectual preacher who prays the most: the sermon that has resulted from much striving at the "throne of Grace" will the Holy Ghost bless most. Suffer me, then, in all humility, as a brother minister in the same temple, to "stir up your pure minds, by way of remembrance"—Aim at preaching Christ; living Christ; praying Christ: so shall you have many many souls for your hire.

We live in strange day's, seemingly at the end of the new dispensation; soon will our office be no more; soon will the Spirit's and the Bride's cry be hushed; and then may "he

that is filthy be filthy still, and he that is unjust be unjust still;" then "it is finished;" then shall the "beloved Son" receive no more into his body, the Church; for then is the New Temple complete, and He cometh to take vengeance. Rejoice Reverend Brethren that yet a little time is given you to proclaim "this is the beloved Son".

Strange indeed are the times, the nations are vexed and lashed into fury, "the kings of the earth stand up and take counsel together, against the Lord and against his anointed;" "the people imagine a vain thing," longing for some ideal good, some panacea, which shall regenerate the world and heal its wounds: but you and I know that there is but "the leaf" of one "tree" which is for "the healing of the nations," and that, the "tree of life," the "beloved Son in whom God is well pleased."

Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable Gift. Thanks, Thanks to the Son for his amazing love. Thanks to the Holy Ghost for "taking of the things of Christ and shewing them to us."

Oh, let us with one heart exclaim, "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen."

APPENDIX.

I am induced to add the following extracts from a Sermon, published by Rev. J. E. Riddle, M. A., author of "Christian Antiquities" and "Ecclesiastical Chronology," which goes far to remove an impression entertained by some, that The Temple at Jerusalem was, with its ceremonial, the model by which the Apostles framed the Christian Church.

"It was an erroneous idea which gained ground in the third century, that the Church was originally constructed and was designed to subsist, after the pattern of the Jewish Temple. And it agreed with that system of false teaching which long prevailed, to maintain the necessity of having altars, priests, and sacrifices within the walls of every Christian church, corresponding to the characteristics of that temple-service which was set forth as the proper and lawful model. But all this was contrary to truth. The fact remains, that the Christian church was constructed by the Apostles, or at least under their inspection, and with their approbation and consent, upon the model, not of the *Temple*, but of the *Synagogue*. Here was the pattern after which the Christian master-builders framed, here the very platform upon which they erected at

once, the worship, the government, and the discipline of the churches of their day; in all these respects acting continually upon their own divinely-inspired and unchangeable maxims of church polity,—"Let all things be done unto edifying;"—"Let all things be done decently and in order;"—Let all your things be done with charity." * * *

"The Temple, as we all know, was not an ordinary place of worship for the whole body of the Jewish people. It was a single edifice, situate in Jerusalem, to which the male portion of the population resorted from all parts of the country, only three times in a year, and for the performance of special and peculiar ceremonies. But the synagogues, on the other hand, were those ordinary places of worship, in which both men and women, old and young, were accustomed to assemble, at least every sabbath day. * *

"What was the service of the synagogue? It consisted in the reading and expounding of God's word, public prayer, and psalmody. At first, the reading and expounding was confined to the books of Moses; but afterwards, and before the time of our Lord and his Apostles, it was extended to the Prophets. Thus Moses and the Prophets were read, explained, and made the topics of exhortation,—in one word, preached—in every synagogue. Public prayer appears to have been offered up after a set or prescribed form; and praise was sung, most probably, from the book of Psalms. Such was the service of the synagogue. And what was the service of the first Christian churches? Substantially the same. Moses and the Prophets were still read, only they were expounded aright with reference to the Messiah; and Jesus, moreover, was preached, by a declaration of his person, work, and offices; in the first instance, by men directly inspired, or furnished with appropriate supernatural gifts, and afterwards, by the reading and expounding of those written records which Apostles and Evangelists left as an addition and final supplement to the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms. Prayers and supplications also, with thanksgivings, were offered up for the worshippers themselves, for their brethren in the faith, and for all men. * * *

"Let us proceed now to ask who were the officers or ministers of the ancient synagogue, and what was its government and discipline?—Each synagogue was governed. and its services conducted, by a certain number of presbyters or elders, who were assisted in some matters by subordinate officers. These presbyters gave attention not only to government and discipline, but also to teaching, that is to say, the public expounding and preaching of the word of God. One of the presbyters was president, or chief ruler of the synagogue, taking the oversight of all matters, whether of doctrine or of discipline; while all acted together, as a council, in matters of importance, and when all were present. The discipline which was exercised had reference to the moral conduct of the people; the severest punishment consisting in expulsion from the synagogue.—And herein we discover, beyond all doubt, the platform of government and discipline in the Christian churches, as those churches were constituted under the observation, and with the sanction, of the Apostles. The early churches had their presbyters or elders, some or all of whom acted as rulers, or ministers of discipline, while others "laboured," moreover, "in word and doctrine." In each body of presbyters there was, probably, from the very first, a president to whom the title of Episcopus, or bishop,-originally, perhaps common to all presbyters—was very soon restricted: while any one possessing extraordinary authority, (as the apostles) or having supernatural gifts, was permitted to exercise that authority or those gifts, according to the nature of the case. And, moreover, a special order of subordinate officers was speedily appointed, perhaps not in all churches, but certainly in some of the largest and most considerable, as overseers of the poor, or rather almoners of the congregation, under the name of Deacons, and thus we discover the origin of that three-fold order of the ministry which has continued in the largest portions of the church even unto this day. * * *

"Again, the times and seasons of the synagogue worship are worthy of remark. The full service, including the reading and expounding of the word of God, took place on the sabbath. And on two other days in the week there was that part of the service which consisted of public prayer. Here also observe the conformity of early churches to the existing pattern. I do not know that we have any account of the two services of prayer on the week-days; and yet it is not impossible that this institution of the synagogue may have been the remote origin of our Wednesday and Friday services. beyond all doubt that the sabbath was the day of especial worship in the primitive church; and so closely were the customs of the synagogue observed, that for several ages the Jewish or seventh-day sabbath was observed according to the original practice of the synagogue, as well as the first-day sabbath, or the Lord's day, in commemoration of our Saviour's resurrection.

Sermon on Luke vii., 5.

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CHRISTIAN SAINTS,

A8

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BRING

A DISCOURSE

DELIVERED

In St. Patrick's Cathebral, Bublin,

REFORE THE

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CHRISTIAN SAINTS,

AS DESCRIBED IN

THE NEW TESTAMENT.

Rom. i., 1 & 7.

"Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called [to be] an Apostle . . . to all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called [to be] Saints."

THE opening addresses of the Apostolic Epistles contain more instruction, and more matter for useful meditation, than some readers of Scripture are aware. And, especially, the titles applied to the persons each Apostle is writing to, tend, incidentally, to throw much valuable light on the history, and on the whole character, of the Gospel dispensation. They indicate to us what were the ideas most familiar to the mind of the writer, and which he expected, or at least in-

tended, to be the most habitually impressed on the mind of the reader. And this is more particularly the case in respect of any remarkable words or phrases that occur frequently, and are repeated in Epistles addressed to different and distant Churches. Appellations thus commonly employed, must, we may conclude, express something essential to the religion of the Gospel; and it is, therefore, most important to ascertain their true import, and full force.

Now in looking over the openings of the several Epistles of Paul, you will find that in the far greater part of them he applies the title of SAINTS to the persons he is addressing.

The Romans, and also the Corinthians, he addresses as "called saints(a):" he applies the title of saints to the Philippians, to the Colossians, and to the Ephesians: besides which, he several times uses the same title at the close of an Epistle, in reference to those whose remembrances he gives: "all the saints salute you."

With respect to his address to the Ephesians,

⁽a) The words "to be," which were inserted by our translators, they have printed in italics, to denote that there is no corresponding word in the original.

"to the saints who are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus," it is worth remarking that our translation might naturally lead the reader to suppose the Apostle to be addressing his Epistle to two distinct classes of persons:-"to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus." But the original will not bear that sense. The exact rendering would be, "to the saints (i.e. the holy), even the believers in Christ Jesus, who are at Ephesus." The word "faithful," I may observe, by the way, was used in the times when our translators wrote, in a sense which it has now lost, to signify "a believer." Thus, in one of the prayers at the close of the communion-service, we read of "the blessed company of all faithful people;" and again, in the 19th Article, a Church is defined, "a congregation of faithful men:" meaning, evidently, in both places, "believers in Christ."

Who then were those Saints and Believers to whom the Apostle addresses his Epistles? Manifestly, not certain persons of distinguished holiness, beyond the rest of the Christians; for he takes occasion to rebuke several of those he

addresses, for their irregularities and grievous sins. It is plain that he uses the term as exactly equivalent to Christians:—as applying to all who had professed Christianity and been baptized into the Christian Church. And the same may be said of several other terms which are applied by him, and by the other sacred writers, to what we now call Christians. are often addressed as the Brethren, the Elect, [or chosen] the Called, and the Disciples. But it is very remarkable that amidst all this variety of appellations, they are never once addressed by that of Christians, which has been, for so many ages, their constant designation. Thrice only does the word occur in the New Testament; and never, as applied by Christians to one another. We find it mentioned, in Acts xi., as the title for the first time bestowed on the Disciples at Antioch: evidently, by the Romans, as the name is of Latin formation. Again we find Agrippa saying to Paul, "almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." And lastly, we find the Apostle Peter adverting to it as the designation, among the unbelieving heathen rulers, of a crime for which the Believers suffered persecution. He exhorts them to take care that none of them suffer "as a murderer, a thief, or an evil-doer; but if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed."

The title then, was, it appears, perfectly well known in the Apostolic age; and it was not held as a term of reproach among Christians; for they gloried in the name of Christ; but yet they never applied it, as we now do, to one another.

Now this fact, (however it is to be accounted for, or whether we can account for it at all or not), is one from which we may draw an important conclusion as to the antiquity of the books of the New Testament. Suppose these books had been, as some daring speculators have presumed to conjecture, not really composed in the apostolic age, by the persons whose name they bear, but compiled in the second, third, or fourth century, out of traditions afloat in the Church, and then fathered upon the Apostles and Evangelists, by fraud, carelessness, and ignorance:—suppose this had been the case, how certain it is that we should have found in these books the word Christians,

as commonly applied by Christians, to each other, as we know it was in those ages. For the word is thus employed by the writers of those ages, and of all subsequent times, whose works have come down to us, almost as commonly as in the present day. Any compiler, therefore, in those ages, making up a pretended original book out of floating traditions, would have been morally certain to apply the title Christians, whenever he had occasion, just as he and all those around him had been accustomed to do.

We, have here, therefore, a complete refutation of that rash conjecture I have been alluding to. The absence, throughout all the New Testament writings, of the word Christian, as applied by Christians to each other, alone furnishes, even to a plain unlearned reader, a complete proof of the antiquity of those writings.

And the anxiety of infidels to disprove that antiquity shews plainly how they despair of contending, in any other way, against their truth. Such accounts as these books contain of a multitude of wonderful events, could never possibly (if false) have been circulated without detection,

at the very time when those events are described as occurring.

As for the cause why the Apostles did not apply to their converts the title of Christians, even if we should be unable to offer any conjecture as to that, the argument for the antiquity of the New Testament remains (as I have said) untouched. Be the cause what it may, the fact is certain, that shortly after the apostolic age, and from thence downwards, to the present day, all Christian writers have applied the title of Christians, just as we do now; and that it never is so applied in any of twenty-seven books of the New Testament; which, consequently, must have been written in the very days of the Apostles. But I think we may perceive, on attentive examination, what the cause was of this procedure of the Apostles.

The name of Christians came into use (as I have said) first, at Antioch in Syria; where a Church was founded, consisting, in a great measure, of Gentile converts, whose admission into the Gospel covenant had just before been announced to the Apostle Peter. And this it was that seems to have occasioned the name to arise.

In the previous period of the Church,—for about the first seven years,—the Disciples being all Jews, the Romans were not likely to think it worth while to give them any other appellation than Jews. They did not trouble themselves about the different religious sects of a people they despised (a). But when they found a large and increasing body of men who consisted of both Jews and Gentiles, it became necessary to distinguish them by some name; and, naturally enough, they called them after their leader, Christ: which, though not his proper name, but his title, the Romans probably mistook for his name. I have already observed that the word Christian is of Latin formation, and must therefore have been coined by the Romans. But the same thing will appear, also, from the impossibility of its having originated with any other class of men. The Christians themselves certainly could not have been its inventors, since, as we have seen, they never used it. And the unbelieving Jews would never have employed a title which condemned themselves, by

⁽a) See Dr. Hinds' History of the Rise of Christianity.

implying that Jesus of Nazareth was indeed the Christ. To have called his disciples Christians, (i.e. followers of the Christ), would have been to acknowledge Him as the Christ; which was the very point the unbelieving Jews would not admit. They accordingly called his disciples Nazarenes; as you may see in Acts xxiv., where Paul is denounced as "a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes," and this is the appellation which, down to this day, they prefer applying to us.

Since, therefore, the title of Christian could not have been introduced, either by the Christians themselves, or by the unbelieving Jews, it remains that it must have originated with the unconverted Gentiles; viz., the Romans, who found it requisite, for the first time, to give a name to a class of men comprehending both Jews by nation and Gentiles.

Now the admission of the Gentiles into the Church, (which is what gave occasion for the origin of the title of Christian), was, as you may plainly see in the narrative of the Book of Acts, and in the Epistles, the most wonderful and unexpected event to all parties in that age, and

the one which was the most revolting to Jewish prejudices. No point of faith did they hold more pertinaciously, (as, indeed, the unbelieving Jews do to this day), than that the Law of Moses, as originally delivered, was to remain in full force to the end of the world. And the promised Christ [or Messiah] they looked for as the deliverer of the Israelites by birth, together with such proselytes as should have made themselves a portion of God's People Israel, by embracing the whole Levitical Law. That the unclean and despised Gentiles should be admitted to equal privileges with the Jews, and that, without conforming to the Levitical Law, was so abhorrent to all their prejudices, that (as you may see in Acts x. and xi.) the Apostles themselves had very great difficulty in admitting it; and, afterwards, (as you may see in Acts xv., and in the Epistle to the Galatians), a great struggle was made, to confine, at least the highest privileges of the Gospel, to Jews and those proselytes who should have completely embraced Judaism.

The sufferings and death of the Christ, whom they had looked for as a mighty temporal deliverer; and again, the admission of uncircumcised Gentiles to a complete equality with believing Jews: these were the two chief stumbling-blocks to the greater part of the Jewish nation. All their hopes, and expectations, and interpretations of prophecy, were utterly at variance with such a Gospel as this. And we cannot doubt that the objection constantly in their mouths would be, that such a Gospel implied a change of purpose in the Most High;—that the Christian preachers represented Him as having violated his promises to the Israelites, and introduced a new religion, at variance with the original Dispensation.

Accordingly, we find the Apostle Paul meeting this objection by continually referring to the prophecies, to show that the Lord Jesus had (as He Himself expresses it) "come not to destroy the Law and the Prophets, but to fulfil them;"—that the prophecies,—though they had not been so understood,—did really point both to a suffering Messiah, and at the call of the Gentiles "to be fellow-heirs" of the promises; being (as Peter expresses it) "elect according to the fore-knowledge of God;" i.e. all along designed by Him to be enrolled among his Elect [or

chosen] people. And this is what Paul speaks of as "the mystery of the Gospel; which had been hidden from the foundation of the world. but now is made manifest." And, in his speech before Agrippa, he gives a summary of his preaching: that he taught "none other things than what Moses and the Prophets did say should be; that the Christ should suffer," (this was one of the two great stumbling-blocks), "and should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the People," (i.e. God's People, Israel), "and to the Gentiles:" this was the other great stumbling-block. And it was accordingly his being the chief Apostle of the Gentiles that exposed him to so much bitterer persecution than the rest. support of these doctrines, he appeals to the Prophets: ("King Agrippa, believest thou the Prophets?") maintaining that the Gospel is no new religion, opposed to the Old Dispensation, but an enlargement and completion of the Old; not a destroying, but a fulfilment of the Law and the Prophets.

Now in order to impress this the more fully on the minds of the Disciples, who were continually in danger of being misled by Judaizing teachers, nothing can be more natural than that the Apostles should have taken the precaution, which we find, in point of fact, they do take, of abstaining from the use of any new title, such as that of Christians, and confining themselves altogether to those titles which were applied to God's People of old. We find, in the Old Testament, the Israelites perpetually called "Brethren," as being literally children of Israel after the flesh; they are also designated the "Called," and "Chosen," [or "Elect,"] People of God; not as being predestined absolutely to obtain his favour, but as being selected for certain high privileges and advantages, through which, they might, if they failed not on their part, obtain extraordinary favour. And they are also called a holy people, i.e. Saints, not as denoting that they personally excelled in holiness of character; but in the same sense in which certain places were called "holy," dedicated, and set apart, to God's service. All these titles accordingly, the Apostles applied to Christians of whatever nation; to point out to them that all are now alike admitted to the privileges of the ancient Church [or Congregation, as the word is rendered in our version of the Old Testament] of Israel; only, with great additional ones; all being "brethren," as being God's adopted children: ("as many as received Him," says the Evangelist John, "to them gave He power to become the Sons of God,") all being God's "Elect [or 'Chosen,'] people;" all being Saints, or "Holy," in the sense of being solemnly dedicated to His service, as the Israelites had been of old; and all being (as Paul calls them, in Galatians) "the Israel of God." "If," says he, "ye are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's Seed, and heirs according to the promise." "Ye are," says Peter, "a chosen generation, [the word is the same which is elsewhere rendered by our translators 'Elect,'] a royal priesthood, a holy nation, [the word here rendered 'holy,' is the same which is elsewhere translated 'Saints,') which before were not a People, but now are the People of God."

Such, I have no doubt, was the reason of the Apostles for confining themselves to these names, instead of employing that of Christians. And this will explain also why, when these reasons had no longer the same force, these names became less employed, and that of Christian came gradually into ordinary use. When Jerusalem and its temple were destroyed, and the Jewish nation was dispersed, and the far greater number of Christians were Gentiles, the danger of Judaizing teachers, which in Paul's time was so great, seems almost to have died away; and Christians seem to have felt, (whether rightly or wrongly). that there was no longer any need of reminding them of what was now become so familiar to them, though originally a great paradox, that men of all nations had succeeded to the full privileges which had originally been confined to the Jews, and were all admitted alike to be God's people. And hence, immediately after the age of the Apostles, the term Christians gradually began to come into use among themselves, as it remains down to this day.

In conformity with what I have been saying, you will observe that Paul constantly uses these appellations, not as implying that his hearers had attained superior Christian excellence, but as suggesting a motive for their exerting themselves

to attain it. He never tells any of them to expect any "call," but addresses them all as "called Saints," and exhorts them to "walk worthy of the vocation whereto they are called." He never speaks of their becoming elect, but exhorts them (Col. iii. 12) "as the elect of God, holy, [or Saints], to put on mercy, kindness, and humbleness," and to "give diligence to make their calling and election sure." Never does he exhort them to be Saints (a), but to "walk as becometh Saints;" never, to enter into any brotherhood, but "to love as brethren." The titles, in short, which he applies, all denote their privileges and their duties; not their good use of those privileges, and faithful performance of those duties. It is to that use and that performance that he exhorts them. And he warns them (e.g. i. Cor. x.) from the example of God's people of old, against neglecting or abusing their

⁽a) The Apostle Peter in one passage uses the word αγιοι ["holy" or "Saints"] in the sense of that personal holiness of life to which he exhorts his hearers to aim. There may perhaps be one or two other instances of its being so employed by the sacred writers; but the other sense—the one above described—is undoubtedly the ordinary one.

high privileges. All the Israelites were God's "Chosen" [or Elect], but "with most of them (a) God was not well pleased," as was shown by their being overthrown in the wilderness.—
"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

It has happened, I think unfortunately, that in adopting the designation of Christians (to which there can be no objection) we have, at the same time, changed in a great degree the signification of the term "Saints." It is now generally used to denote, not all Christians,—all who have been dedicated to Christ in baptism,—but some particular Christians distinguished from the rest, either as having received the gift of inspiration, as we speak of Saint Mathew, Saint Mark, Saint Paul, and the rest of the Apostles and Evangelists,—or else as being supposed to possess an extraordinary degree or kind of personal holiness, beyond what is expected of ordinary Christians. These notions have, in their most exaggerated form, led to the practice which unhappily prevails, and has for many ages prevailed, among a very

large portion of the Christian world, of invoking deceased Saints, and begging their intercession with the Most High; thus conferring on his creatures the attribute of omnipresence—each of these Saints being supposed to be able to hear the invocations of millions of votaries in many thousand different parts of the world, who are addressing him at the same time!

But even those who have kept clear of this error are yet often found attributing to those whom they designate "Saints," such a degree and kind of personal holiness as is far from being required or expected of Christians in general, and which it would be most extravagant for them to aim at or hope for.

One may often, accordingly, hear persons professing to have no pretensions to be considered as Saints, or thought of ever becoming such; though at the same time they would be indignant at not being considered as Christians. And yet the Apostles, as we have seen, always used the word Saints as equivalent to what we mean by Christians.

What would have been, think you, the astonishment of Paul, could he now return to the earth,

at hearing professed believers in Christ disayowing all claim to the title of "Saints"? horror and astonishment would indeed be much diminished when he came to understand that we use the word in a very different sense from his. But without denying our right to make such a change, I cannot but think he would have questioned the wisdom of doing so in this instance. Evangelists, and Prophets, and Apostles, I think he would consider as best distinguished by the very titles of "Evangelist" and "Prophet" and "Apostle," rather than by that of "Saint," which in Scripture is applied to every one of God's People—to every member of what is called in the oldest of the creeds, "the Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints." For the saintship of the Apostles and Evangelists consisted (according to the language of Scripture) not in what was peculiar to them, but in what was common to them with others; not in their inspiration and other miraculous gifts, but in those gifts offered to Christians generally, which are of incomparably higher value. And of this, at least, I cannot doubt; that Paul would earnestly warn us against being misled by our own use of language; -- against fall-

ing into confusion of thought, and into serious error respecting things, through the careless employment of words. Most earnestly, we may be assured, would he warn us that Christianity is not two religions,—one for ordinary men, and another for Saints,—but one single religion, designed for all men alike, and not setting up several different standards of personal holiness for different persons. He would warn us against being led to imagine that there are among the number of Christians certain classes or parties, or orders of men, of whom a Christian life—a conformity of character to the Gospel precepts is more required, or is less required, than of the generality. "They that are Christ's (says this Apostle) have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts." "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature." "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his." He speaks not, you observe, of what can be done, and is required to be done, by certain pre-eminent Saints, but of "any man" who has enlisted at baptism under the banner of Christ crucified. In the sense in which Paul accounted himself a Saint, in that sense he calls all Christians Saints.

As for the saintship which consists in the possession of inspiration from Heaven, or of any other miraculous gifts, great is the mistake of imagining that such gifts render the possessor necessarily acceptable in God's sight, and are to be regarded as a substitute for moral holiness of character; or again, that these supernatural gifts necessarily ensure personal holiness; or again, that the absence of such gifts renders a less degree of personal holiness sufficient. God enabled some to speak in new languages; of them it was required that they should use the gift to his glory, and the good of their fellow creatures, in preaching the Gospel throughout the world. To others was "given the gift of healing, by the same Spirit;" it was their task to heal the sick accordingly. To others is given only the knowledge of the Gospel, and the promise of Divine aid to help their infirmities, and to enable them to conform their own heart and life to the precepts and example of their Lord: and these also are required thus to conform, and to make the best use of their own advantages. No where are we told that a less degree of Christian virtue is requisite in one who does not possess miraculous endowments. For, these endowments were designed, not for the benefit of the possessor, but of his neighbours. Miracles were the instruments the Lord employed for the propagation of his Gospel among all nations; that men might glorify, not the man who exercised such superhuman powers, but God. The inspired preachers and writers were inspired for the purpose of instructing us in the Gospel of their Divine Master.

But would it not be presumptuous for any one of us in these days to pretend to be as good a Christian as Paul or Peter, or any other of those we call emphatically "Saints"?

Presumptuous indeed it would be to pretend to a high degree of Christian excellence—to "count oneself to have apprehended": but to aim at attaining that excellence, through divine assistance, is so far from being presumptuous, that there is more presumption in cherishing a hope of God's favor without it. It would indeed be a most impious presumption for one of us to pretend to inspiration; because we have it not. It would be presumptuous for one of us to expect to be as eminent an instrument in propagating the Gospel among all nations as the Apostle Paul; because

we are not so qualified by miraculous gifts as he was. But we are not less enabled, or less bound, each one of us, himself to perform his own Christian duties—to lead a Christian life, and to have a Christian heart; and in short (as Paul expresses it) to "walk as becometh Saints," than the Apostles themselves. And there is great and dangerous presumption in the false humility of hoping for acceptance with our Great Master while we lower our own standard of personal Christian holiness, and claim an exemption from the duty of aiming at the highest degree of Christian moral excellence, on the ground that we are not gifted with miraculous powers.

These powers were given, as I have said, not for the benefit of the possessors, but of others, for their conviction and instruction. And the possession of these miraculous gifts neither proved any one to be personally pure and holy in heart, nor necessarily made him such. Judas Iscariot, we should remember, exercised, in common with the other Apostles, miraculous powers, during our Lord's abode on earth. Many of the Corinthians, again, are severely rebuked by Paul for their strange abuse of some of their miraculous

gifts. The Lord Jesus himself speaks of his finally disowning, as "workers of iniquity," some who should have "done many mighty works in his name." And Paul speaks strongly of his own sedulous care as to his own life, "lest by any means after having preached to others, he should himself become a castaway."

Let no one therefore suppose either that more, or that less, of Christian virtue is requisite for an Apostle or Prophet than for an uninspired Chris-Both alike are, in the scriptural sense of the word, "Saints;" and both alike are enabled, and therefore required, to "walk as becometh Whether a man have received hea-Saints." venly light by immediate personal inspiration, or through the words of an inspired Evangelist, in either case he has been blessed with that light, and both are required to live "as children of the Those who have no power to cast out evil spirits from the possessed, are yet enabled and required to cast them out from themselvesto "resist the Devil, and he will flee from them." Those who have no miraculous gifts of healing the sick and cleansing the leprous, are yet empowered, and therefore expected, to apply to the

Great Physician of Souls for the cure of their own spiritual diseases, and to "purify themselves even as He is pure." And those who have not the gift of tongues, are yet called on to do their best towards diffusing the knowledge and practice of the Gospel-religion among all who do lie within their reach.

That valuable Institution, the members of which are now assembled, and for which we are anxious to obtain a more general and active support from the Public, is so constituted as to enable all, whether clergy or laymen, to take some share—a share which they must rejoice to take, if they are Christians in any thing but in name - in the great work of promoting the coming of Christ's kingdom, and the doing of "His will on earth as in heaven," which they daily pray for. By contributing towards the support of Ministers in places where their services are much needed, and cannot without such contributions be obtained,—by thus preserving multitudes of our brethren from spiritual destitution, from gross religious ignorance, from pernicious error, from irreligion, and from sin,-the Laity as well as the Clergy may have a share in

forwarding the great work for which their Saviour lived and died.

Is there any Layman of our Church who is disposed to say in his heart—"this is a valuable Institution, and one to which the Clergy ought to contribute liberally; it is a holy and an important work, and one which ought to excite great interest among the Clergy; but religious matters are more properly their concern, Laymen cannot be expected to take any particular interest in the propagation of religion?"

I dwelt in the beginning of this discourse on the error of regarding Christianity as two religions—one for ordinary Christians, and another for "Saints"—for the "Elect"—for God's People,"—or some particular class, party, or order of men. I dwelt, I say, on that error in especial reference to this occasion, because the prevalence of the error and its evil consequences are in no point more observable than in what relates to the distinction between the Clergy and the Laity. That there is a distinction of offices between the two is undeniable; but so far forth as they are Christians—i.e. (in the apostolic sense of the word) Saints, there is no distinction. And yet

does it not often happen that such actions and such habits of life as are clearly at variance, not with the *ministerial* character only, but with the Christian character, are, by the world in general, thought very lightly of in a Layman, though in a Clergyman they would be severely censured? Is it not notorious that many duties which, if the teaching of Christ and the Apostles is to be received, are not merely clerical duties but Gospel duties, are either wholly neglected, or very little attended to, by such as have not taken holy orders? And this temper of mind is found not least in many of those who are among the most rigid in their demands of an exemplary performance of Christian duties by the Clergy. It is commonly (and very truly) said, that the Clergy ought to be men of exemplary life; i.e. a life which sets a good example to their people: but it is remarkable that this truth is by none more earnestly dwelt on than by some of those who seem never even to think of being bound to follow that example, by leading the same sort of life themselves. Now if they really hope for salvation by means of their pastor's good conduct,—by his practice of Christian virtue in their stead,- they ought at least to be consistent in their language, and to call it, not exemplary virtue, but vicarious virtue.

But to pass over the case of those who tolerate in themselves unchristian habits, or who neglect Christian duties, generally, and to confine myself to one branch of Christian duty, that of labouring to spread among all, and especially among our brethren, the knowledge and practice of the Christian religion, what do we find - and what ought we to find-among the lay members of our Church? Most true it is, that a Layman is not justified in taking on himself any that are exclusively ministerial functions—in intruding himself into what are strictly clerical offices. wish each one who hears me to consider how far, and in what way, without any such intrusion, it is possible, and consequently a duty, for him to assist towards promoting that coming of Christ's kingdom which he is accustomed to pray for; and next, to consider how far he is himself performing that duty.

We all know that it is the proper office of the Ministers of our Church to lead the devotions of the congregation according to the prayer-book, and to administer the Sacraments to them, and publicly to preach and expound to them the Scriptures. Is it also their sole, or their especial office to bear all the expenses of every institution for the diffusion of Christian knowledge and practice? Can delicate scruples, and conscientious dread of unduly intruding into the ministerial office, hold back any one from contributing towards such an object? Can he think that indifference in such a cause, though unbecoming the profession of a Clergyman, is consistent with the profession of a Christian?—that the Clergy may be expected to feel a great interest in such matters; but that it is hardly to be looked for in the Laity?

If there be any who entertain these sentiments, I would ask such a one what he would think of our doctrine, if we were to teach that the highest glories of Heaven are reserved for the Clergy exclusively; that the souls of Laymen are of comparatively small account in their Redeemer's sight; and that the best Christians must be content with a very humble and inferior place in the mansions of eternal bliss, unless they have been admitted to holy Orders? How great would be

the indignation at such a groundless and arrogant assumption on our part, that would be felt and expressed by all; — by all, including all those who are content to forego all pretensions to an equal share in Christian zeal, in Gospel duties—though not to forego their equal claim to Christian hopes, to Gospel promises, to heavenly happiness!

Let any one of you, my Christian friends, who does feel that gratitude and love to his Saviour—that high value for the blessing of Gospel light, which prompts him to seek how he may do something to manifest his sense of mercies received—let any such person behold in this Society an opportunity of promoting "glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will towards men;" not merely worldly peace, but heavenly, and divine good-will towards men.

But if again, any one feels conscious within his own heart that his Christian gratitude, and love, and zeal, fall lamentably short of what he knows he *ought* to feel; and if he sincerely desires to kindle into warmth those sentiments which are but coldly alive within him; let him behold here one of the best exercises by which

to foster and strengthen those sentiments. as we may observe in all departments of life, actively befriending any one increases our regard for him; actively serving our country strengthens the feeling of patriotism; activity in the service of a party strengthens party-spirit; and so of the rest. A cause in which we have exerted ourselves becomes more and more endeared to us through those very efforts. Act therefore as you would spontaneously and gladly act if you had those Christian feelings, and that Christian zeal which you know the Christian ought to have, and which you wish to generate and encourage in your own breast; and the very outward acts themselves, coupled with earnest petitions for Divine Grace, will produce, and strengthen, and keep up that very disposition of which such acts are the natural fruit.

I know indeed that the severe pressure of that awful visitation of famine which has fallen on this land, renders it doubly difficult at the present time to support any institution which, like this, depends on voluntary contributions. But I would remind any one who may be disposed to make this a plea for withholding contributions from this

Society, to consider that this pressure has fallen with most especial severity on the Clergy; whose means, generally speaking, are very slender, and whose charities have often more than exhausted their means: so that there is more need than ever for aid from the Laity to support any important institution which, if left to the unassisted efforts of the Clergy, must finally become extinct. But independently of this consideration, I would remind you, that to regard bodily wants and sufferings as alone calling for charitable relief, and to pay little or no attention to spiritual wants—to diseases of the soul-to the needs of those who may, or who should "hunger and thirst after righteousness"—would be quite at variance with the principles of the Gospel, and with the precepts and the example of its Author. the hungry indeed, and healed the sick; but his main object was to teach men to know and to do the will of their Heavenly Father. He exhorted his hearers to "labour not so much for the meat that perisheth," as for that "which endureth unto everlasting life;" and "to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness," in preference to taking anxious thought what they should eat

and drink; and He taught us, in His own form of prayer, before we ask for our "daily bread," to pray that his "kingdom may come, and his will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

If you are in earnest when you utter those words, your actions must be of a piece with your prayers. Endeavour therefore to make known as widely as possible the existence, and the real character, and the strong claims to support, of this Society; and strive to induce your friends and neighbours—most especially by setting them the example—to contribute liberally, according to their ability, to its very scanty funds. Exhort those who are rich to give bountifully, and those whose means are small to remember that He who commended the widow's mite has taught us not to be ashamed to give a little, if we give not grudgingly but gladly; since "it is a cheerful giver that God loveth."

And pray therefore that He will implant in you and in your brethren a grateful, a liberal, and a Christian heart. Pray also that He will be pleased to bless our efforts in His holy cause; and that at least that cause may not suffer through any remissness on your part;—through

any preference, in you, of the perishable riches of this world, to the "treasure which neither rust nor moth doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal."

THE END.



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THE

SEARCH AFTER INFALLIBILITY,

CONSIDERED

IN REFERENCE TO THE DANGER OF

RELIGIOUS ERRORS ARISING WITHIN THE CHURCH

IN THE

PRIMITIVE AS WELL AS IN ALL LATER AGES.

BEING

A DISCOURSE

DELIVERED

In the Cathedral of Christ Church, Bublin,

ON THE OCCASION OF

THE ORDINATION HELD ON SUNDAY, THE 22MD AUGUST, 1847.

BY

RICHARD WHATELY, D.D.,

ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN.

Second Goition, rebised and enlarged.

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THE CANDIDATES

ORDAINED AT CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL, DUBLIN.

ON SUNDAY, THE 2200 AUGUST, 1847,

THIS DISCOURSE.

PUBLISHED AT THEIR REQUEST.

IS DEDICATED,

WITH EARNEST WISHES FOR THEIR PRESENT AND ETERNAL WELFARE,

AND FOR THE DIVINE BLESSING ON THEIR MINISTERIAL LABOURS,

BY THEIR SINCERE FRIEND AND FELLOW-LABOURER,

THE AUTHOR.

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SEARCH AFTER INFALLIBILITY.

Acts, xx. 29, 30, 31.

"I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears."

This parting admonition of the Apostle Paul to the Christian ministers of the Churches of Miletus and Ephesus, cannot be read by any careful student of Scripture without deep interest. But it will be found, on attentive reflection, to suggest even more matter for profitable meditation, and even more of instructive practical lessons, than might at first sight appear.

And to some of these I propose now to call your attention.

I. In the first place you will observe, that what the Apostle here says to the clergy whom he is addressing, is of a piece with much that we find in several of his Epistles. In his Epistles to the Corinthians, especially the Second, he warns them against "false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ, and ministers of righteousness;" even as "Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light:"-men seeking to disparage Paul's apostolic authority, and to introduce doctrines opposed to his. "There must be," says he, "heresies among you, that they which are approved [δοκιμοι] may be made manifest among you."—1 Cor. xi. 19. The Epistle to the Galatians, again, is almost made up of similar cautions. The Philippians also are warned [chap. iii.], in like manner, to be on their guard against teachers who corrupted the Gospel. Cautions of the same kind are addressed to almost all the other Churches to which he wrote; and both Timothy and Titus are earnestly and repeatedly exhorted to watch against the inroads of these corruptions.

The Apostle Peter also cautions the disciples against those "unlearned and unstable" persons, who "wrest," he tells them, "the Scriptures to their own destruction."

The Apostle John, again, in his Epistles, is chiefly occupied in warning his hearers against those false prophets,—those "wolves, in sheep's clothing,"—of whom his Master had prophesied, and bid His disciples beware.

And here we find Paul, in his farewell address to the Elders, earnestly reiterating the solemn warning of this danger, which, he tells them, he had been continually repeating for three years. "From among themselves," he tells them,—"from the very bosom of their own Church,"—men will arise teaching perverted doctrines(a), "to draw away [the] disciples(b) after themselves."

Now it might seem wonderful, or even incredible, if we had not these records before us, that any such thing should have taken place; I mean, that in the very times of the Apostles themselves, whose authority from Heaven was attested by their miraculous powers, any false teachers should have not only arisen, but should have gained a hearing, and been able to draw away the disciples by pretending to an authority equal or superior to that of the genuine Apostles. And if we had not providentially pos-

⁽α) διεστραμμενα.

⁽b) τους μαθητας.

sessed these records of the early dangers of the Church, we might have been disheartened or utterly thrown into despondency at the view of the various errors introduced in later times by men of high pretensions as religious teachers. We might have felt as if God had forsaken His Church when He withdrew from it the guidance of the inspired Apostles, and left Christians to find their safety in vigilant and careful and candid examination of every doctrine taught. But, as it is, we see that, from the very first, this care and watchfulness were indispensably necessary to guard against the danger of false teachers introducing corruptions of the genuine Gospel. Strange and incredible as it may seem to us that any such men should have attempted, and should have succeeded in the attempt, to rival the Apostles, we are distinctly informed that so it was: and that Christians were then required to be on their guard against the grievous wolves in sheep's clothing, who would enter in, not sparing the flock.

We ought not, therefore, either to wonder, or to despond, at finding Christians in all subsequent ages exposed to the same dangers, and called on to exercise the same vigilance, as in the very times of the Apostles themselves.

II. And this leads me, in the second place, to the consideration of the way in which Paul tells his hearers to provide against the danger.

Does he promise them that the *primitive* Church shall be safe from it?—that no inroads of error will take place for the first three or four centuries? On the contrary, he speaks of the danger as immediate.

Or does he tell them that they will find their safety in apostolical succession?—that it is miraculously provided that no teacher shall ever mislead them, who has but been regularly ordained by himself, or by those appointed by him to succeed him in the office of ordaining? On the contrary, he warns the Elders that even from the midst of their own Body,—of their own selves,—will arise men teaching a perverted Gospel to draw away the disciples after them.

Or again, does he tell them that when any point of doubt and difficulty arises, they are to find safety in making a reference to Peter, and to those who shall be divinely appointed from time to time as his successors and representatives, for infallible decisions and directions? Not a word is said of any Apostle but himself; or of any one who should succeed him in the apostolic office. To himself, during his life,

they would naturally apply by letter, if opportunity offered, for directions in any case of doubt that might arise. But not even any Apostle,—much less any successor of an Apostle,—is mentioned by Paul as the oracular guide, whom, after his own death, they were to consult.

Or, does he bid them resort to some central Church,—whether at Jerusalem, or at Rome, or at Byzantium,—and seek there for infallible guidance(a)?

Or does he direct them to summon a General Council, and refer every question that may arise to the decision of a majority of its votes; with a full assurance that these should be so supernaturally overruled by the Holy Spirit as to secure them from the possibility of error?

No: he makes no allusion whatever to any other Church or Prelate; to any successor of Peter or of the other Apostles; or to any infallible Council, as their guide. But he tells them to TAKE HEED TO THEMSELVES, and to the flock they are set over; he

⁽a) See the Remarks on the "Pillar and Ground of the Truth," in Dr. Hinds's most valuable Tract on "Scripture and the Authorized Version." There is a strong preponderance of probability in favour of his view.

tells them to "watch;" and he exhorts them to remember his own earnest warnings to them.

Now, if there had been provided by the Most High, any such safeguard as I have alluded to,—if Paul had known of any Order of men, any Prelate, any particular Church, or General Council, designed by Providence as an infallible guide, and a sure remedy against errors and corruptions, would he not have been sure, on such an occasion as this, to give notice of it to his hearers? If, when he foresaw a perilous navigation for the vessel of the Church, he had known of a safe port, just at hand, and readily accessible, is it credible that he would have never alluded to it, but have left them exposed to the storms? Would he have been, in that case, "pure"as he declares he was-" from the blood of all men?" Can any one seriously think, that against the dangers which he had been warning them of, and weeping over, for three years, he knew of a complete safeguard, and yet was so wanting in his duty,—so careless of their well-being,—as never to make the slightest mention of anything of the kind? To suppose this would be to suppose him destitute not only of all faithfulness in his high office, but of common prudence and rationality.

And yet if any such provision really had been made by the Author of our faith, it is utterly inconceivable that the Apostle Paul should have beenand that too on such an occasion as this-left in utter ignorance of its existence. Whatever may be the precise meaning of our Lord's promise, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world," it is at least perfectly clear what it could not mean: it could not relate to something either unknown to Paul, or kept back by him from his hearers. that he knew, and that it was for their benefit to learn, he had, as he solemnly declares, taught to them; and this was no less, he assures them, than "the whole counsel and design of God." "I take you to record this day that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remem-



ber, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one, night and day, with tears."

From all this we may learn, among other things, how great is the mistake of those who are satisfied to trace up some doctrine or practice not countenanced by Scripture, to a very early period; to what they call the Primitive Church; and consider this as establishing a divine sanction for what may have been, after all, one of the "perverse things" introduced by false teachers, and against which Paul so earnestly warned the Elders.

- III. The third remark which I have to make on this passage is, that the exposure of Christians to these dangers, and the call upon them,—both ministers and laity,—for the continued exercise of vigilant caution,—this is far from appearing to us either acceptable or probable. It is not at all what man's wishes would have called for, or his conjectures anticipated, in a divine Revelation; but is aliene both from his feelings and from his reasonings.
- 1. To examine and re-examine,—to reason and reflect,—to hesitate, and to decide with caution,—to be always open to evidence,—and to acknowledge that, after all, we are liable to error;—all this is, on many accounts, unacceptable to the human mind,—both to

its diffidence and to its pride,—to its indolence, its dread of anxious cares,—and to its love of selfsatisfied and confident repose. And hence there is a strong prejudice in favour of any system which promises to put an end to the work of inquiry at once and for ever, and to relieve us from all embarrassing doubt and uncomfortable self-distrust. And this is done, either by setting forth the authority of an infallible Church, which is to prescribe, on every point, what we are to believe and to do; thus relieving us from all trouble and anxiety, and from all necessity of acting on the Apostle's warning to "take heed to ourselves;" or again, by putting in place of such a Church, immediate inspiration from Heaven, whether bestowed on each individual who belongs to a certain sect or party, or on some highly-gifted leader, who will communicate to his followers the messages he receives from Heaven. Widely different in many points as these sects, and parties, and churches are from each other, they all agree in the one fundamental point just noticed. They all address themselves to that powerful principle in human nature I have been adverting to, the craving for infallibility in religious matters.

I call it "a craving for infallibility" (although



hardly any one is found in words claiming, or expecting to be, personally infallible), because it is evident that he who is infallibly following an infallible guide, is himself infallible. If his decisions on each point coincide exactly with those of an authority which is exempt from error, that his decisions are exempt from error, is not only an undeniable, but almost an identical proposition;—it is as plain as that things which are equal to the same are equal to each other.

But this, though self-evident as soon as stated, is sometimes lost sight of in practice. A man will speak of himself as being fallible, and as having no expectation of being otherwise. But his meaning must be (supposing him quite certain that he has an infallible guide, always accessible, and to which he constantly conforms),—his meaning must be, that he would be fallible if left to himself; that his exemption from the possibility of error is not inherent, but derived. But actually and practically he does consider himself infallible.

Though the gnomon of a sun-dial has no power in itself to indicate the hour, yet when the sun shines on it, the motions of its shadow must be as correct as those of the sun's rays which it follows. And, in

like manner, he is infallible, practically, in his belief, who always believes exactly what an infallible Church or leader believes.

This craving, then, I say, for infallibility, predisposes men towards the pretensions, either of a supposed unerring Church, or of those who claim or who promise immediate inspiration. And, accordingly, I have known persons sometimes waver for a time between these two classes of pretensions, and ultimately give in to the one or to the other. again, you may find persons changing from the one to the other, and sometimes thus changing more than once(a); yet still always clinging to the confident expectation of finding that infallibility I have been speaking of. They are inquiring only after a way of exempting themselves from all further inquiry. Their care is only to relieve themselves ultimately from all further need of vigilant care. They are navigating in search of a perfectly safe haven in which the helm may be abandoned, and the vessel

⁽a) And it might be added, that one may find instances of the same individual, himself unchanged, exposed to severe censures, at different times, not only from different persons, but even from the same, first for refusing to join the one party, and afterwards for refusing to join the other, most opposed to it.

left to ride securely, without any need of watching the winds and currents, and of looking out for rocks and shoals. They hope to obtain, in all ages of the Church, that exemption from all need of vigilant circumspection, which was not granted even in the age of the Apostles; since we find that, even when there were these infallible guides on earth, Christians are perpetually warned of the danger of mistaking "false apostles" for genuine.

2. But the promise of such infallible guidance as I have been speaking of, not only meets man's wishes, but, as I have observed above, his conjectures also. When we give the reins to our own feelings and fancies, such a provision appears as probable as it is desirable. If, antecedently to the distinct announcement of any particular Revelation, men were asked what kind of revelation they would wish to obtain, and again, what kind of Revelation they would think it the most reasonable and probable that God should bestow, they would be likely, I think, to answer both questions by saying, "Such a Revelation as should provide some infallible guide on earth, readily accessible to every man; so that no one could possibly be in doubt, on any point, as to what he was required to believe and to do; but

should be placed, as it were, on a kind of plain high road, which he would only have to follow steadily, without taking any care to look around him; or, rather, in some kind of vehicle on such a road, in which he would be safely carried to his journey's end, even though asleep, provided he never quitted that vehicle.

"For, a man might say, 'if a book is put into my hands containing a divine revelation, and in which are passages that may be differently understood by different persons,—even by those of learning and ability,—even by men professing each to have earnestly prayed for spiritual guidance towards the right interpretation thereof,—and if, moreover, this book contains, in respect of some points of belief and of conduct, no directions at all,—then there is a manifest necessity that I should be provided with an infallible interpreter of this book, who shall be always at hand to be consulted, and ready to teach me, without the possibility of mistake, the right meaning of every passage, and to supply all deficiencies and omissions in the book itself. For otherwise this revelation is, to me, no revelation at all. Though the book itself be perfectly free from all admixture of error,—though all that it asserts be



true, and all its directions right, still it is no guide for me, unless I have an infallible certainty, on each point, what its assertions and directions are. It is in vain to tell me that the pole-star is always fixed in the north; I cannot steer my course by it when it is obscured by clouds, so that I cannot be certain where that star is. I need a compass to steer by, which I can consult at all times. There is, therefore, a manifest necessity for an infallible and universally accessible interpreter on earth, as an indispensable accompaniment,—and indeed essential part,—of any divine revelation.'"

Such would be the reasonings, and such the feelings, of a man left to himself to consider what sort of revelation from Heaven would be the most acceptable, and also the most probable,—the most adapted to meet his wishes and his wants. And thus are men predisposed, both by their feelings and their antecedent conjectures, towards the admission of such pretensions as I have above alluded to.

And it may be added, that any one who is thus induced to give himself up implicitly to the guidance of such a supposed infallible authority, without presuming thenceforth to exercise his own judgment on any point relative to religion, or to think for

himself at all on such matters,—such a one will be likely to regard this procedure as the very perfection of pious humility,—as a most reverent observance of the rule of "lean not to thine own understanding;" though in reality it is the very error of improperly leaning to our own understanding. For, to resolve to believe that God must have dealt with mankind just in the way that we could wish as the most desirable, and in the way that to us seems the most probable,—this is, in fact, to set up ourselves as His judges. It is to dictate to Him, in the spirit of Naaman, who thought that the prophet would recover him by a touch; and who chose to be healed by the waters of Abana and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, which he deemed better than all the waters of Israel.

But anything that falls in at once with men's wishes, and with their conjectures, and which also presents itself to them in the guise of a virtuous humility,—this they are often found readily and firmly to believe, not only without evidence, but against all evidence.

And thus it is in the present case. The principle of which I have been speaking,—that every revelation from Heaven necessarily requires, as an

indispensable accompaniment, an infallible interpreter always at hand,—this principle clings so strongly to the minds of many men, that they are even found still to maintain it after they have ceased to believe in any revelation at all, or even in the existence of a God.

There can be, I conceive, no doubt of the fact, that very great numbers of men are to be found,—they are much more numerous in some parts of the Continent than among us(a);—men not deficient in intelligence, nor altogether strangers to reflection, who, while they, for the most part, conform externally to the prevailing religion, are inwardly utter unbelievers in Christianity; yet still hold to the principle,—which, in fact, has had the chief share in making them unbelievers,—that the idea of a divine revellation implies that of a universally accessible, infallible interpreter; and that the one without the other is an absurdity and contradiction.

I have said that it is this principle that has mainly contributed to make these men unbelievers. For, when a tolerably intelligent and reflective man has fully satisfied himself that in point of fact no

⁽a) See note A at the end of this Discourse.

such provision has been made,—that no infallible and universally accessible interpreter does exist on earth (and this is a conclusion which even the very words of Paul, which I have taken as a text, would be alone fully sufficient to establish),—when, I say, he has satisfied himself of the non-existence of this interpreter, yet still adheres to the principle of its supposed necessity, the consequence is inevitable, that he will at once reject all belief of Christianity. The ideas of a revelation, and of an unerring in-TERPRETER, being, in his mind, inseparably conjoined, the overthrow of the one belief cannot but carry the other along with it. Such a person, therefore, will be apt to think it not worth while to examine the reasons in favour of any other form of Christianity. not pretending to furnish an infallible interpreter. This,—which, he is fully convinced, is essential to a Revelation from Heaven,—is, by some Churches, claimed, but not established, while the rest do not even claim it. The pretensions of the one he has listened to, and deliberately rejected; those of the other he regards as not even worth listening to.

The system, then, of reasoning from our own conjectures as to the necessity of the Most High doing so and so, tends to lead a man to proceed



from the rejection of this own form of Omissianity to a rejection of revelation altogether. But does it stop here? Does not the same system lead naturally to Atheism also? Experience shews that that consequence, which reason might have anticipated, does often actually take place. He who gives the reins to his own conjectures as to what is necessary, and thence draws his conclusions, will be likely to find a necessity for such divine interference in the affairs of the world as does not in fact take place. He will deem it no less than necessary, that an omnipotent and all-wise and beneficent Being should interfere to rescue the oppressed from the oppressor,-the corrupted from the corrupter,-to deliver men from such temptations to evil as it is morally impossible they should withstand; -and, in short, to banish evil from the universe. And, since this is not done, he draws the inference that there cannot possibly be a God, and that to believe otherwise is a gross absurdity. Such a belief he may, indeed, consider as useful for keeping up a wholesome awe in the minds of the vulgar; and for their sakes he may outwardly profess Christianity also; even as the heathen philosophers of old endeavoured to keep up the popular superstitions: but a real belief he will

regard as something impossible to an intelligent and reflective mind.

I am very far from saying that all, or the greater part, of those who maintain the principle I am speaking of, are Atheists. We all know how common it is for men to fail of carrying out some principle (whether good or bad) which they have adopted;—how common, to maintain the premises, and not perceive the conclusion to which they lead. But the tendency of the principle itself is what I am speaking of: and the danger is anything but imaginary, of its leading, in fact, as it does naturally and consistently, to Atheism as its ultimate result.

I have said that the non-existence of such an infallible interpreter as I have been alluding to, is what an intelligent man might be convinced of even by the very passage in the Book of Acts that is before us;—by the absence of any reference or allusion to anything of the kind, in a discourse of the Apostle Paul's, in which he could not have failed to mention it, had it existed. But there are many other considerations from which the same conclusion follows:

1. For instance, the incompetency of men in ge-

neral to exercise a correct judgment on questions pertaining to religion, is the main argument from which is inferred the necessity of an infallible interpreter. And yet this very argument destroys the ultimate conclusion maintained. For it presupposes that men are fit to decide, by their own judgment, that most difficult question, as to the claim of any particular Church, Party, or Person to be that interpreter. Certain passages of Scripture are alleged as implying that a certain Church is the infallible guide appointed by Providence to supersede our private judgment, which is incapable of deciding aright as to the meaning of Scripture. But how am I to know that such is the true sense of those passages? we are competent to judge of their meaning, then our alleged unfitness for judging, and the necessity thence inferred, are done away. If we are not competent to judge of the meaning of any doubtful passages, then, though we may admit the necessity of an unerring interpreter, we can never be sure that we have found one.

If,—which I believe is practically the commonest procedure,—we interpret those passages in conformity with the decision of our supposed infallible guide, and, in implicit reliance on that, we are pal-

pably begging the question,—first assuming the infallibility of our guide, and by means of that assumption proceeding to prove it. And the same may be said in reference to those who, instead of any existing Church, appeal to "the Primitive Church," and the "consensus Patrum,"—the common belief of all the orthodox writers of the first ages(a). Whether that primitive Church, and those first ages, shall comprehend three centuries, or four, five, six, or seven; and

(a) The reference so often made to the words of Vincentius Lirinensis,—" quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus," &c.—seems altogether unaccountable. That whatever is believed, and always has been, by all Christians, everywhere, is a part of the Christian faith, is a truism as barren as it is undeniable. It cannot possibly be called in to solve any question in dispute; since by its own character it relates expressly and exclusively to such points as never have been disputed among Christians.

But I conceive that those who appeal,—or rather, who pretend to appeal,—to this maxim, do, in reality, mean by "all," merely "all the orthodox." And who are the orthodox? I suppose, those whom most persons accounted such, and as each will be likely to apply that term to those whose doctrines he approves, the result will be, that the belief of the majority is to be the stamp of orthodox belief; and that this again is to represent universal [or catholic] belief; and, finally, that this so-called universal belief is to be the test of Gospel Truth.

On this principle, who were the orthodox and who the true worshippers, in Israel, when Elijah alone was left of the Lord's prophets, when Baal's prophets were 450 men? orthodox, and what are the doctrines they taught, in works forty times more voluminous than the Bible, and capable of quite as great a variety of interpretations,—all these are questions to be decided in the first instance, by those who are, by supposition, incompetent judges, and who for that very reason are to rely implicitly on an infallible guide! This is to tell them that, because they cannot steer their course without a pilot, they must make a voyage to a distant port in order to find one.

And the case is much the same with those who promise, or who lay claim to, such an inspiration from heaven as shall supersede all exercise of reason, and preclude the possibility of error. The exercise of reason is called for in the highest degree, and errors the most fatal are to be dreaded, in deciding on the conflicting claims laid before us,—on the claims of those who, while they teach the most opposite doctrines, all profess alike to be under the immediate direction of the Holy Spirit, and all fail in giving proof of it, as the Apostles did, by working sensible miracles in the presence of all, whether believers or unbelievers.

The alleged necessity, therefore, of an infallible



interpreter, does of itself shut out from a reflecting mind the hope of *obtaining* one. For that necessity is inferred from such a supposed incapacity in us for judging rightly, as must equally unfit us for judging what claim to our confidence those have who offer to guide us.

2. Again, the alleged necessity is, for an infallible interpreter universally and readily accessible. And this no Church can even pretend to have pro-Supposing a central infallible Church to vided. exist, it is not one Christian in ten thousand that can put himself in direct communication with its supreme governors. Each individual may, indeed, use its formularies, and may assign to them the same authority as to Scripture; but he can be no more competent to interpret the one than the other, or to supply aright any omissions; he is still in want of an infallible guide to direct him how to conform with unerring exactitude to his Church. And this guide must be, to the great mass of mankind, the pastor under whom each is placed. The pastor's conformity to the Church must be taken on his own word. If he be either ignorant, or erroneous, or dishonest, if, in short, every individual pastor be not himself



infallible, the Christian people, whose incompetency to judge for themselves has been all along presupposed, may be as much misled as in their perusal of the Scriptures.

3. Moreover, the claim to exemption from error and from dissension, if put forth by any Church which claims also universality, is thereby at once destroyed. If, indeed, any one claims infallibility on the ground of personal inspiration in himself, or in the leader he follows, he can only be met by a demand for proof, in the shape of sensible miracles, that his pretensions to this inspiration are better founded than those of others who differ from him. But when the two claims, to exemption from error and to universality, are both put forward, they mutually destroy each other by their practical incompatibility. If there be any universal Church of which all professing Christians are members, even though disobedient members,—subjects and children, even though undutiful and rebellious,—then this Church is manifestly not exempt from error and dissension; as is plain from the differences and controversies existing among Christians, and the refusal of many of them to submit to the decrees of this Church. If, again, there be any Church that is exempt from error among its members, it is, for the same reason, manifestly not *universal*. There may, conceivably, be a Church to whose dominion and decisions all Christians *ought* to submit; but unless all do thus submit it cannot be properly called *universal(a)*.

Vain are the attempts made to get rid of this dilemma by urging that all false doctrines are condemned by the Authorities of the Church, and that the guilt of schism is incurred by all who do not obey them. Exemption from error, in any community, consists, not in the condemnation of error, but in its non-existence among the members of that community. Universality consists, not in a claim to universal dominion over all Christians, but in the submission of all Christians. Otherwise, there is no sect so small and inconsiderable that might not pretend, on equally good grounds, to be the universal and unerring Church. It might plead that its doctrines were received by all except heretics, and its supremacy acknowledged by all except schismatics; denouncing

⁽a) The urging of both these pretensions in conjunction, on reasons which profess to establish the one or the other separately, is an instance of what I have called, in the Elements of Logic, book iii. § 11, the fallacy of the Thaumatrope.

all as heretics and schismatics who did not receive those doctrines, and submit to that dominion. And this is merely saying, in other words, that all agree with it except those who disagree, and that all submit except such as refuse submission.

The claims, therefore, if so explained, become altogether nugatory. If not so explained, but taken in the natural sense of the language employed, they are negatived by undeniable and notorious facts(a).

From these and similar considerations a reflecting mind can hardly fail to arrive at the conclusion that a universally accessible infallible guide, such as shall supersede all exercise of private judgment, and all need of vigilant care and inquiry, and shall preclude all possibility of error, has not been, in fact, provided. And if he still cling to the belief of the necessity of such a guide as an indispensable adjunct to a divine revelation, his road to infidelity is straight and short(b).

Numbers there are, no doubt, who do not follow up such principles to their legitimate consequences;

- (a) See note B at the end of this Discourse.
- (b) See note C at the end of this Discourse.

many, from habitual want of reflection, and absence of mental cultivation; and others, from resolutely abstaining from all reasoning and all investigation, because they have determined to be believers, and consider their faith to be both the more praiseworthy, and also the more secure, the less they reflect and examine(a). They dread the very danger I have been alluding to,—that reasoning will lead to infidelity; and they seek to avoid this danger, not by discarding the false principle from which that reasoning sets out, but by shunning all reasoning, and stifling all inquiry and reflection.

But this freedom from all uneasy doubt,—a desire for which leads to that craving for infallibility I have been speaking of,—this, after all, is not always attained by such a procedure. A lurking suspicion will often remain,—which a man vainly endeavours to stifle,—that the foundation is not sound. The superstructure, indeed, may be complete. Once granted that the church, sect, party, or leader, we have taken as our guide, is perfectly infallible, and there is an end of all doubts and cares respecting

⁽a) See Essays on some Dangers to Christian Faith, &c., p. 108 [2nd edition], and Elements of Logic, p. 390 [8th edition], for a very curious exemplification of what is here said.

particular points. But an uneasy doubt will sometimes haunt a man,—in spite of his efforts to repress it, and however strenuously he may deny, even to himself, its existence,—whether the infallibility claimed, which is the basis of the whole fabric, be really well established. A suspicion will occasionally cross the mind, however strenuously repelled, "Is there not a lie in my right hand?" And the reluctance often shewn to examine the foundation, and ascertain whether it is really sound, is an indication, not of full confidence in its firmness, but of a lurking suspicion that it will not bear examining.

It is thus that the craving after the mental repose of infallible certainty tends to defeat its own object. Many, however, no doubt, do really enjoy the confident, though groundless, security they boast of. And many, we may expect, will complain of, and censure, and reject, what I have been saying, on the ground that it is a "cheerless" doctrine. And this charge is, to a certain extent, true. To be told to "work out our own salvation with fear and trembling," may be less "cheering" than to be told that we have no need for any fear and trembling. When Paul "ceased not for three years to warn every one, night and day, with TEARS," it was not, certainly, because he judged

this to be the most cheering to his people, but because he knew it to be the most for their real good, and the most conformable to truth. It was precisely because he was aware that pains-taking vigilance is less agreeable than confident and boastful security,—it was for this very reason, doubtless,—that he was so assiduous in his warnings, lest any of his people should be,—as so many are, now, and in every age,—led away blindfold by their wishes, and flattered to their ruin by deceitful teachers. It is a common error, and one which men always need to be put on their guard against, to trust to boastful promises, and to lean upon pleasant and cheering hopes, without examining well whether these promises and hopes can rationally be depended on.

But it is the part of true wisdom not to lose, in a vain effort after what Providence has denied us, the advantages which it does place within our reach.

Difficult indeed it is,—or rather impossible,—for us to understand why God has dealt with Man as He has. We may be unable to answer the question, why the Revelation He has bestowed has not been accompanied by the gift of an infallible interpreter on earth, accessible to all men, and precluding all

possibility of doubt as to the meaning of any part of it. It may be hard to explain, why, both in this and in many other most important matters also, Man should have been left to act on his own responsibility, and according to the best of his own fallible judgment; exposed to various dangers, and called on for the exercise of that vigilant care, which, we find, is, in point of fact, often not exercised. We may be unable, in short, to understand why Earth is not Heaven;—why Evil of any kind is permitted to exist.

All this we may be unable to explain; but our inability to explain will not alter facts; and it is for us to make the best use of things as they are, instead of wondering or seeking to understand why they were not made otherwise.

That spurious humility above alluded to, the implicit reliance on fallible man, must be discarded; and true humility must take its place. Instead of considering what, according to our notions, God must have done, or ought to have done, we should inquire what He has done; and what use we are allowed and expected to make of it.

If we inquire whether the holy Scriptures did really come from Him, we shall find proof abundantly sufficient to satisfy a candid and humble mind; but not sufficient-strange as this may appear to us-to force conviction on the uncandid and arrogant. And if we inquire for what purposes the Scriptures were given, and how we are to make use of the gift, they will themselves abundantly teach They were evidently given us to enlighten the path of those who will open their eyes to the light, and take heed to their steps; but not of such as love darkness better than light, or view the light through the discoloured glass of their own prejudices and inclinations, or deliver themselves up to be led blindfold by blind guides. They were given, not to supersede, but to exercise, our diligence and watchful care. They abound (as we have seen) in warnings of the danger of perversions and false doctrines. And they bid us Christian ministers "take heed to ourselves and to the flocks committed to our care." We are to study, to the best of our power, to attain to the true meaning of them ourselves, and to impart it to our people, but with a full conviction and confession of our own fallibility.

To complain of this,—to reject or undervalue the revelation God has bestowed, urging that it is no revelation to us, or an insufficient one, because un-

erring certainty is not bestowed also,—because we are required to exercise patient diligence and watchfulness, and candour, and humble self-distrust,—this would be as unreasonable as to disparage and reject the bountiful gift of eye-sight, because men's eyes have sometimes deceived them;—because men have mistaken a picture for the object imitated, or a mirage of the desert for a lake; and have fancied they had the evidence of sight for the sun's motion; and to infer from all this that we ought to blindfold ourselves, and be led henceforth by some guide who pretends to be himself not liable to such deceptions.

The two great volumes,—that of Nature and that of Revelation,—which God has opened before us for our benefit, are in this respect analogous (a). Both are, in themselves, exempt from error; but they do not confer complete exemption from all possibility of error on the student of them. As the laws of Nature are in themselves invariable, but yet are sometimes imperfectly known, and sometimes mistaken, by natural philosophers, so the Scriptures are intrinsically infallible, but do not impart infallibility to the student of them. Even by the most learned

⁽a) See Essays on some Dangers to Christian Faith, &c. Essay III. s. 5.

they are in many parts imperfectly understood; by the "unlearned and unstable" they are liable to be "wrested to their own destruction."

We have indeed the gracious promise of God's Holy Spirit to "help our infirmities," both in respect of our faith and of our conduct;—to guard us not only against doctrinal error, but also, no less, against sin;—to further our growth both in grace, and also in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. And we are sure that, as far as we are under the guidance of that Spirit, we cannot but be right both in our belief and our practice(a). But how far we are, in each instance, thus guided, we must not presume to pronounce with certainty. "It is God that

(a) There seems no good ground for inferring from our Lord's promise to be with his people "always, even unto the end of the world," that He must have conferred on them, or on some portion of them, infallibility in judgment, any more than impeccability in moral conduct; which is, at least, not inferior in importance. The Holy Spirit which He promised should be "given to them that ask it," is not more needed, or more promised, with a view to correctness of belief, than to holiness of life: and yet, with respect to this last, most men admit that, "if we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us:" why should we not be equally ready to admit that "if we say we have no error, we deceive ourselves?" If we utter with sincerity the words "who can tell how oft he offendeth? O cleanse thou me from my secret faults!" we shall not fail to add, "who can tell how oft he mistaketh?"

worketh in us, both to will and to do" (and, we may add, to judge and believe also) "of his good pleasure;" but this is given by the Apostle as a reason, not for sitting down in careless and self-confident security, but that we should "work out our own salvation with fear and trembling." And this same anxious and diligent care must be shewn, among other things, in our study of God's Holy Word(a).

"If we say that we have no sin,"—and equally if we say that we have no error,—" we deceive our-

(a) Every one, doubtless, is led to what is right both in faith and practice, as far as he is led by the Spirit of Christ;" but how far he is, in each instance, under that guidance, he cannot know with certainty till the day of judgment. While continually aiming at perfection, both in belief and practice, the Christian is never authorized to "count himself to have apprehended." Though he may, in point of fact, be right, he must beware of the arrogance of confidently pronouncing and insisting on his own unerring rectitude, unless he shall have received an immediate revelation, and can produce his credentials as an inspired messenger from God.

As for those who do appeal,—in support of a claim to continued, or to renewed inspiration in their respective Churches, or in the leaders they venerate,—to sensibly miraculous proofs, such as gifts of tongues, gifts of healing, &c., these persons, how much soever they may fail in establishing the miraculous facts, are at least consistent and intelligible in the conclusions they maintain. The test they appeal to is fair:—"The God that answereth by fire, let him be God."—Dangers to Christian Faith, &c., Essay III. s. 4, pp. 146, 148.

selves:" for whatever part of our conduct, and of our opinions, may be in fact perfectly right, we are not authorized confidently to pronounce that it is so. "I judge not," says the Apostle Paul, "mine own self, for I know nothing by myself,"—(i. e. I am not conscious of any failure in my ministerial duties);— "yet am I not hereby justified; but He that judgeth me is the Lord."

Listen (a), then, my Christian friends, to this blessed Apostle; learn what he has taught; and attend to the warnings he has given. And let no one persuade you, that by doing this you will be thrown into distressing and incurable doubts and perplexities. Fear not, that by forbearing to forestall the judgment of the last day,—by not presuming to dictate to the Most High, and boldly to pronounce in what way He must have imparted a revelation to man,—by renouncing all pretensions to infallibility, whether an immediate and personal, or a derived infallibility,—by owning yourself to be neither impeccable nor infallible (both claims are alike groundless), and by consenting to undergo those trials of vigilance and of patience which God has appointed for



⁽a) See Essays (First Series) on Some Peculiarities of the Christian Religion, pp. 360-262, note.

you,—fear not that by this you will forfeit all cheerful hope of final salvation,—all "joy and peace in believing." The reverse of all this is the reality.

As far as any one is conscious of striving, with humble prayer for divine aid, to do his best, in the way God has directed, he may reasonably hope to be preserved from all fatal errors and deadly sins; and he may trust that any mistakes into which he may have fallen, not through carelessness or perversity, but from mere error of judgment or unavoidable ignorance, will not be imputed to him as sins, but that he will "be accepted according to that he hath, and not according to that he hath not."

Those have, in reality, more to dread, who, professing to renounce all private judgment, have based their whole system of faith on human conjectures as to what a divine revelation must necessarily be; and who have shut their eyes to the many plain warnings of our Lord and his Apostles, to "take heed to ourselves." Paul has declared, that if even "an Angel from Heaven preach any other Gospel than that which he has delivered, let him be accursed;" and he has left us a written record of his teaching, with which to compare whatever is proposed for our acceptance as Gospel truth; thus, according to our

Lord's precept, judging of the tree by its fruits. Great, then, must be the danger of those who, in fact, reverse this precept, and judge of the fruits by the tree; by at once concluding, that whatever is taught by the Holy Church, or whatever such and such a person professes to have had revealed to him from Heaven, and to be moved by the Holy Spirit to utter, must be Gospel truth, however at variance with God's written Word.

And as their real danger is great, so they do not always (as I have above observed) succeed even in lulling themselves into complete security. While they crave for more than God has given, and will not be satisfied without that infallible certainty of exemption from error, which would cut off all need of vigilance against error, and of inquiry after truth, they often (besides building, on a false foundation, a superstructure of error) fail also of that confident repose and peace of mind which they have aimed at. And those, on the other hand, who, in true humility, set themselves to conform to God's directions, will be partakers of His promised blessings. While such Christians as have sought rather for peace,—for mental tranquillity and satisfaction,—than for truth, will often fail both of truth and peace, those of the

opposite disposition are more likely to attain both, from their gracious Master. He has taught us to "take heed that we be not deceived," and to "beware of false prophets;" and He has promised us His own peace and heavenly comfort. He has bid us watch and pray; He has taught us, through his blessed Apostle, to "take heed to ourselves," and to "work out our salvation with fear and trembling;" and He has declared, through the same Apostle, that He "worketh in us;" He has bid us "rejoice in hope;" He has promised that he "will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able to bear;" and He has taught us to look forward to the time when we shall no longer "see as by means of a mirror(a), darkly, but face to face;"—when we shall know, "not in part, but even as we are known;"when faith shall be succeeded by certainty, and hope be ripened into enjoyment. His precepts and His promises go together. His support and comfort are given to those who seek for them in the way He has Himself appointed.

Teach this to your people, you, my Brethren, who are engaged, or are about to engage, in the

⁽a) Δι' Ισόπτρου εν άινίγματι.—1 Cor. xiii. 12.

Sacred Ministry. Teach them to trust in God, and not transfer their allegiance to uninspired Man. Instruct them to the best of your ability, according to your solemn vow, out of the Scriptures. Refer them to these; and teach them to search the Scriptures for themselves (like the Berœans of old), "to see whether those things be so" which they shall have heard from you; and warn them not to expect infallibility in themselves, or in you, or in any uninspired man, but to "prove all things, and hold fast that which is right;" and caution them against being led away, by bold assertions and arrogant pretensions, into those corruptions of Gospel truth which will always, from time to time, be found arising within So shall they be enabled to "take up the Church. the serpents" they will meet with; and "if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them."

Take heed, then, my Brethren, to yourselves, and to the flock over which you are appointed overseers; watch, and remember ever the solemn warnings Paul has given us: and may you be enabled, like him, at the close of your ministry, to stand "pure from the blood of all men."



APPENDIX.

NOTE A, PAGE 21.

Many also there are, I am convinced, in this country, and some in the Continental States, by whom the "infallibility of the Church" is understood in the same sense as the constitutional maxim that "the king can do no wrong;" by which every one understands, not that the sovereign is personally exempt from error, but that there is no superior authority on earth to which he is responsible, and to which appeal can be made against any exercise of his lawful prerogative; and that to establish any such authority would be to subvert the Constitution for no object; since it would be, after all, only setting up as supreme one fallible man or Body of men instead of another. In like manner, some probably consider it best that there should be, in religious matters, some one supreme authority on earth, which, though not really infallible, should be treated as if it were so; that is, that its decisions should be final and without appeal, and binding on all Christians. This, they conceive, is better than that interminable controversies, arising out of the differences of men's private judgments, should be suffered to arise, and to continue unchecked. And, no doubt, peace and unanimity might be thus produced, though at the expense of truth,—I mean sincere conviction of truth,—and at the price of transferring to fallible man that devotion which is due to God only, if all Christians throughout the world

would agree to acquiesce in this feigned infallibility. But, as it is, truth and genuine piety are sacrificed for the sake of an universal peace and agreement, which (as is subsequently pointed out) are not attained after all.

NOTE B, PAGE 31.

I am well aware that when the two claims,—that to universality, and that to exemption from dissension and from error,—are brought forward in conjunction, and it is undertaken to reconcile them with each other, it is usual to explain one or both of them in a sense different from the obvious and natural meaning of the words, so as to render the two claims compatible. Then it is that we are told that "Catholic" or "Universal" means only the religion of a considerable majority of professing Christians, or the religion the most widely diffused throughout Christendom: or we are told that the Universal Church means merely that which all professed Christians ought to belong to; and that adults of sound mind who have received Christian baptism, and deliberately profess Christianity, are not necessarily members of the Universal Church, or Christians at all.

And we are also told that exemption from dissension and from error belongs to those only who submit in all points to the decisions of the rulers of the Catholic Church. And doubtless if all mankind, or any number of men, would but come to a perfect agreement in any one religion, be it true or false, they could not but be exempt from religious dissension, and, if not from error, at least from anything that they themselves would account an error.

But surely this is to "keep the word of promise to the ear, and break it to the hope." It is not in any such sense that the pretensions I have been speaking of are usually put forth, and naturally understood, when taken separately. And it is not under any such explanations as the above, that those pretensions are found so alluring and so satisfactory as, to a great number of persons, they are; but in the natural and ordinary sense of the words. The expression "Catholic," or "Universal," Church is naturally understood to denote that which comprehends all Christians. And by the word Christians is understood those who acknowledge and professedly embrace the religion founded by Jesus Christ. And those who designate any of these as Heretics are so far from denying them the title of Christians (though unsound and perverted Christians), that they imply it; since Pagans or avowed Atheists are never reckoned Heretics.

I am not, be it observed, defending this use of the word "Christian" as the most advisable to be adopted, if we were framing a new language. It might, we will suppose, have been advisable so to define the term that no two Christian Sects or Churches should apply it to the same persons. I am simply stating a fact as to the actual sense conveyed by the word in our existing language. And that such is the sense conveyed by it is as much a fact as that we actually call the ninth month of the year September, and the tenth October; though if we were remodelling our language, the impropriety of such names would be obvious.

And again, exemption from dissension and from error naturally conveys the idea, not of these evils being condemned by certain Authorities when they arise, but of their never arising at all.

And it is in these obvious and natural senses of the words that the above pretensions are in general,—when taken separately,—put forth with boastful confidence, and prove so attractive and so consolatory to the minds of many as to be at once admitted without any close scrutiny as to how far they are well-founded.

But when the two claims are brought into juxta-position, and it is inquired how far they are compatible, then they are explained away in the manner above alluded to. The promise is made in one sense, and kept in the other.

I will take the liberty of subjoining an extract relating to this point from the Appendix to the second Essay on the Kingdom of Christ.

"I have seen reproaches full of scornful exultation cast on Protestants for having recourse, when treating of the subject of Church-government, to reasonings drawn from general views of Human Nature, and to illustrations from secular affairs: and for calculating what are likely to be the decisions of a Synod so and so constituted, without adverting to the promises of divine presence and protection to the Church, and without expressing confidence of providential interpositions to secure it from discord, error, and other evils.

"This kind of language has, at the first glance, a plausible air; and is well calculated,—one cannot but think, designed,—to impose on pious and well-intentioned but ignorant, weak, and unreflecting minds among the multitude. But a sober examination will shew it to be either wholly irrelevant to the matter in hand, or else a mere groundless pretence.

"It is indeed true that the Lord has promised to be with his People 'even unto the end of the world,' and that 'the Gates of Hell' (i. e. death) 'shall not prevail against his Church;' that is, that Christianity shall never become extinct. And his 'Spirit which helpeth our infirmities' will doubtless be granted to such as sincerely exert themselves in his cause: though not necessarily so as to crown those exertions with such complete success, as, we know, was not

granted to the Apostles themselves. Our efforts, however, in that cause, whether He in his unsearchable wisdom shall see fit to make them a greater or a less benefit to others, will doubtless, as far as regards ourselves, be accepted by Him. And a pious confidence in whatever God has really promised, Protestants do not fail to inculcate on suitable occasions.

- "But when the question is as to the probable results of such and such a procedure in a Synod, and as to the measures likely to be adopted by a Government so and so constituted, it would manifestly be irrelevant to dwell on those general promises of the divine blessing. If there were a question what means should be used to protect a certain district from hurtful inundations, no one would think of cutting short the discussion by a reference to the promise made to Noah, that the whole Earth should never again be laid waste by a deluge. It is evident, therefore, that the reproaches I have alluded to must be understood as having reference to (that which alone is pertinent to the present question) confidence in a promise of supernatural interference to secure the Church for ever from strife, schism, and corruption.
- "And certainly if we had received any such promise, all apprehensions, all calculations of probabilities,—all reasonings from the analogy of other human transactions, would be superseded; and we should have only to 'stand still and see the salvation of God.'
- "But every one, except the grossly ignorant and unthinking, must be well aware that no such promise has ever been fulfilled, and consequently (if the Scriptures are to be taken as a record of divine truth) that none such was ever made.
- "We find the Apostle Paul declaring that 'there must needs be heresies, that they who are approved may be made manifest;' we find him labouring to repress the irregularities and party spirit which even in his own time had crept into

the Church of Corinth; and warning the Elders of Ephesus and Miletus to 'take heed, because after his departure grievous wolves would enter into the fold.' Corruptions in doctrine, disorders, dissension, and insubordination, are evils of which he is continually giving notice to his People as what they must be prepared to encounter.

"And when we look to the ecclesiastical history of subsequent Ages—exhibiting the sad spectacle of contests almost equally dividing the Church, between the Arians, for instance, and the Athanasians, on points of doctrine, and between the Donatists and their opponents, on a question of ecclesiastical Polity,—besides the mutual anathemas of the Eastern and Western Churches, and besides all the cabals, and intrigues, and secular motives, and evil passions, which have notoriously found their way into Councils, and Conclaves, and ecclesiastical Courts—when we contemplate all this, we see but too well what reason the Apostle had for his warnings.

"But there is no need in the present case to resort to ancient history. The very existence of Protestants (to say nothing of the Greek Church) is sufficient to nullify, in respect of the Church of Rome at least, the notion of an exemption from error and from schism being promised to that, as to the Universal or Catholic Church. For the Church of Rome claims all professing Christians as properly belonging to it; considering Protestants as children, though disobedient children;—subjects, though revolted subjects. The very rise, therefore, and continued existence, of Protestantism, proves the non-existence in the Catholic Church (if the Church of Rome be supposed such) of any immunity from heresy and schism. And if it be attempted to avoid this conclusion by allowing that Protestants and members of the Greek Church are not to be regarded as in any way

belonging to the Church of Rome, then, the pretensions of that Church to be the Catholic (i. e. Universal) Church, must be given up.

"Whatever plausibility therefore there may appear at first sight in the pretensions, separately taken, of that Church, on the one hand to perfect purity of doctrine, and unity, and on the other hand to Universality, it is evident that both conjointly cannot be maintained with even any show of reason. Either the one or the other must be abandoned(a). If Protestants, and members of the Greek, the Armenian, and other Churches, do not belong to the Romish Church, it cannot be Universal; if (which is what its advocates actually maintain) all Christians do belong to it, then, it manifestly is not exempt from divisions, and contrariety of doctrine. It is in vain (as far as the present question is concerned) to urge that the doctrine and procedure of Protestants, &c., are condemned by the authorities of the Church of Rome, and by all its sound members. For an exemption from a certain evil must consist, not, in its being censured when it arises, but in its not arising at all. Indeed it would be very easy,—and also quite nugatory,—for any Church whatever to set up the boast that its doctrines are received by all,—except those who dissent from them; and that all submit to its authority, -except those who refuse submission.

"The extraordinary Providence therefore which is boasted of as securing the true Church from division and from error, and which Protestants are reproached with not trusting to or claiming, has evidently no existence in the very Church to which those who utter the reproach belong. And one can hardly doubt that they must themselves be aware of this;

⁽a) They are evidently on opposite sides of the Thaumatrope. See Logic, B. iii. s. 11.

and that when they speak, in a tone of exulting confidence, of the miraculous exemption of their Church from the inroads of false doctrine and dissension, they are only seeking to quiet the minds of the unthinking Vulgar with a delusive consolation.

"How far this kind of language may work an opposite effect on the minds of the more educated Classes,—how far the great prevalence of infidelity among those Classes on the Continent may be accounted for by their continually hearing (from those who, they will conclude, ought to know what their own Scriptures say) of promises having been made to the Church which, it is evident, as a matter of experience, have not been fulfilled, is an inquiry into which I will not now enter. My own conviction is that every kind of pious fraud is as much at variance, ultimately, with sound policy, as it is with Christian principle."

NOTE C, PAGE 31.

It is worth remarking, that a very great additional danger of infidelity exists in all those countries in which it is an established principle that the profession of the religion which the government sanctions, may, and should be enforced by coercive means, and that it is the right and duty of the civil magistrate to prohibit and forcibly repress all departure from it. I do not doubt indeed that many persons are sincere believers in Christianity, who yet maintain this principle; but the principle itself,—besides being wholly at variance with the spirit of Christianity,—acts also as a kind of specific poison to sincere belief. Like a pestilential atmosphere, it makes gradual and inperceptible advances in debilitating the system, and tainting the inmost springs of life, more or less speedily according to the constitution of each

individual; and carries off its victims one by one, without external blow, by a secret internal decay.

One mode in which this cause operates is, by destroying the support which each man's conviction ordinarily derives, and may fairly and reasonably derive, from that of his neighbours. For, whatever any one is compelled to profess, we cannot rationally feel sure that he does not inwardly disbelieve; since we know that if he does disbelieve it he dares not openly say so.

But it is in another way that the principle in question produces its most deleterious effects. In proportion as men are accustomed to regard it as right that outward profession should be enforced, they will come to consider this profession as everything, and inward belief,—which cannot be enforced,—as insignificant. Conformity will be regarded as the great object, and truth as a matter we need not be concerned about.

"The highest truth," says Dr. Arnold, "if professed by one who believes it not in his heart, is, to him, a lie, and he sins greatly by professing it. Let us try as much as we will to convince our neighbours; but let us beware of influencing their conduct when we fail in influencing their convictions. He who bribes or frightens his neighbour into doing an act which no good man would do for reward, or from fear, is tempting his neighbour to sin; he is assisting to lower and to harden his conscience,—to make him act for the favour and from the fear of man, instead of for the favour and from the fear of God; and if this be a sin in him, it is a double sin in us to tempt him to do it." And any one whose conscience has been thus lowered,—who has been so long habituated to this sin as to cease to consider it as a sin, -will have cast aside all thoughts of sincerity in religious profession, either in himself or in others; and will regard it as even a duty

(like the ancient heathen philosophers) to conform to the religion of his country for the sake of the public good.

It is mere trifling and evasion to pretend (as some have done) to qualify the principle, by saying that the Government is to enforce a true religion, and not any other; since, of course, each Government will decide and proclaim that to be the true one which it patronizes; and from its decisions there is no appeal. If it has a right, then, to make and enforce these decrees,—if it be, as some express it, the duty of a Government to provide a true religion for the subjects, in the sense of deciding what religion they shall be obliged, under a penalty, to adhere to,-and if it be the duty of the subjects, as well as their interest, to acquiesce (as it must be if Government have this right, since right and duty imply each other),—then, since different, and even opposite religions may be, and in fact are, in different countries, thus enforced, all of which cannot be true, but all of which, each in its own country, men are bound to profess, a complete disconnexion is thus effected between religious profession and truth. For it is utterly impossible, on the above principles, that there can be any one true religion revealed from heaven which it is the duty of every individual to adopt. All must be mere creatures of human legislation for the purposes of state policy.

And this, I suppose, was the meaning of a member of the Legislature, of some celebrity, who is reported to have said that he believed all religions to be true, and all equally true. That they could, all and each, be really from Heaven, their palpable discrepancy renders clearly impossible; and, therefore, if they are all on a level, it must follow that none of them is a real revelation. "All equally true" must have meant "all equally false." But all,—I suppose he meant,—are alike suited to keep the vulgar in salutary awe, and to

gratify a certain craving in their minds after some superhuman object of veneration.

This seems to be just that description of infidelity which the principle I have been speaking of,—that of compulsory conformity,—often actually produces, and always tends to generate and to foster. See Essays on the Difficulties of St. Paul's Writings, &c., Appendix, note E.

THE RND.

.

UNION WITH CHRIST

THE CONDITION OF

COMMUNION WITH ANGELS AND SAINTS.

A SERMON,

PREACHED AT THE CONSECRATION OF THE NEW CHANCEL OF THE

Church of S. Mary the Virgin and S. Picholas, Littlemore, on the feast of s. michael and all angels, m.dccc.xlviii.

BY THE RIGHT REVEREND

SAMUEL, LORD BISHOP OF OXFORD,

CHANCELLOR OF THE MOST NOBLE ORDER OF THE GARTER,
AND LORD HIGH ALMONER TO THE QUEEN.



OXFORD:

ALEXANDER AMBROSE MASSON.

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M.DCCC.XLVIII.

LITTLEMORE:
PRINTED BY ALEXANDER AMBROSE MASSON.

A SERMON, &c.

HEB. xii. 22, 23, 24.

"But ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the Living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of Angels. To the general assembly and Church of the first-born which are written in Heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect; and to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant, and to the Blood of Sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel."

THE special object of this Feast differs in kind from that of any other in the Church's kalendar. Hitherto we have traced the prints left upon the sands of this world by men of like nature with ourselves. Following their King, the saints of Christ have one by one preceded us, bearing our burdens, groaning under our sorrows, tried by our temptations, assailed by our enemies, weakened, it may be,

by our falls, upheld by that grace which may be ours. Peaceful as is now their unbroken rest in Christ's paradise; safe as they are in His hands, refreshed as we believe them to be in that unknown land. which the fourfold stream of God's presence ever waters, by special visitations of the Beloved of their souls; new and great, and on many sides by us inconceivable as are the conditions of that life of theirs, which is so entirely hidden with Christ in God; yet are they our very brethren. With some of them we have directly conversed; upon some of them we have leant heretofore in our journey through life: and very bare and desolate has it been to us since they were taken to their rest. Many have been patterns whom we have striven, with whatever feebleness, to copy. With all we have, and feel, the deep and mysterious union of a common High and awful as is the thought, we do nature. believe that what they are, that we may be: that the grace which wrought in them works in us: that the marvellous gift of regeneration which, even from the cradle, drew some of them by a multitude of small steps and imperceptible gradations, up to the highest mysteries of the hidden life, and which in others wrought more marvellously yet, transforming pollution into purity, sinners into penitents, and penitents into saints, that this fearful and blessed gift is ours also, and must work in us either a

horrible destruction or the likeness of their glory. And hence the first instincts of the new life draw us into a sensible unity with the blessed company of Christ's saints; of "the spirits of just men made perfect."

But, so it is not as to those blessed spirits of whom we keep remembrance to-day. With them we have no community of nature; we know not even whether they are material beings, or beings purely spiritual. Directly there seem no common links between ourselves and them; nay, their very nobleness of state seems to part them from us utterly. Wherever we read of them in the Word of God, it is as of those who are in the full radiance of the light ineffable, and are pervaded with its lustre. Like clouds which float in the fulness of the sunbeams, they give back to us the radiance of the eternal throne, and are themselves of a brightness too dazzling for our weakened gaze. Such was that Angel whom S. John saw in vision, and at whose feet he would have fallen down and worshipped, by whose glory the earth was lightened. And this majesty which rests upon them is the outward expression of their inward holiness; they are emphatically "the holy Angels." What a ground then of separation is there here between ourselves and them. They have never known sin. It is not with them as with the highest saint, who has himself been recovered by a mighty

grace, and even in his utmost purity, still knows the secrets of corruption, and can feel in the true unity of sympathy for the tempted and the guilty. are "the elect Angels;" the Angels who kept their first estate. On their perfect purity of being has passed no shadow of blemish or corruption. They are as they were when the infinite Love of the Creator breathed forth their unsullied being into the full perfectness of absolute holiness. They have ever known, and done, and loved in all things the Will of God. To each one of them that blessed law which holds together their exalted ranks, has been the very purpose of his being. How must sin then appear to such as these? How incomprehensible must be its mystery, how hideous its defilement. If, as it seems alike from God's Word and the conclusions of reason, the creature cannot possess a knowledge of evil whilst he is himself unstained with it, what a black darkness must wrap us up from that angelic gaze. Self-will, that master sin, with all its train of fleshly impurities, and spiritual defilements; the high thought, the unbelieving heart, the rebellious striving, the imbruted spirit, how must the sight of these in one so feeble as man shew to those elder born of God's creation, whose whole glorious and exalted being is but the energy of perfect love, rejoicing in the blessedness of the Creator's Will.

Yet it is of such we make mention in the Church to-day; speaking of them as though we and they were united together in its mysteries, and had already a true fellowship one with the other. in doing this we do but act upon the plain words of God's revelation to us. The words which I have read to you from the epistle to the Hebrews, would, if they stood alone, be sufficient to establish this wonderful truth. "Ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem; and to an innumerable company of Angels, to the general assembly and Church of the first-born which are written in Heaven." Plainly here this is spoken of as now our condition. are come;" ye have now a fellowship with that general assembly of God's holy creatures to which belong the innumerable company of the heavenly host. This is the fruit of the great act of redemption. is to be already in the Church of Christ. This was what was wrought for us, His brethren, by the bitter passion of our Lord. And this passage does not stand alone. We are expressly told that we are the objects of the care, and love, and service, of these holy beings. By some mighty and marvellous secret of the new kingdom, instead of rejecting us utterly, as defiled with sin, they wait upon us. " Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" and Holy Scripture is perpetually revealing the particulars of this ministry. We see their squadrons encamped around a beleaguered prophet; their hands laying hold upon a tarrying patriarch; their agency revealing now the deepest things of God to the soul of one of His appointed messengers, and anon the spring of water in the wilderness to the fainting child and brokenhearted mother. We find them cheering S. Paul in vision, and breaking S. Peter's chains, declaring themselves fellow-servants of S. John, and even turning from beholding the face of the Almighty Father to watch over the little ones of the earthly family.

What then is the mighty mystery of love whereby they, being what they are, can tend with care and look with love on such as we are? It is at least intimated to us in the Word of God. It is through our Lord Jesus Christ that we and they are brought toge-Doubtless whilst Adam stood in the purity of creation those elder sons of light had full communion with this new being, upon whom was stamped the image of their God. And when Adam fell, he was not cast utterly away. We know not how far the mysteries of redemption were, from the first opening of its mighty works, revealed to the holy Angels; we know that those mysteries, as declaring God's great glory, do form the object of their adoring and enquiring wonder, for they are the things "into which the Angels desire to look." That great promise

which man's first uttermost necessity drew forth from the treasure-house of mercy, that "the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head," may have revealed to them, even from its utterance, some foreshadowing of the wonderful counsels of Almighty love, whereby mankind should be redeemed. Certainly they saw humanity as in a process of recovery; and when Christ the Lord became incarnate, when He, who from eternity, had been their King, when He, who was the express image of the Father's Person, He who, as it seems, manifests to every creaturely intelligence the unapproachable Father, when He, in the Virgin's womb, shaped for Himself a true body, and stood on earth a very man, then, for His sake and through Him, the holy Angels had indeed a fellowship with us; then was begun the fulfilment of that mystery which, in words the depth of which we cannot hope here to fathom, is darkly opened to us, when we are taught that "in the dispensation of the fullness of times he shall gather in one all that are in Christ, both which are in Heaven and which are in earth, even in Him." This then, brethren, is the root of this day's celebration, and from this there follow one or two inferences at once bearing upon our special purpose to-day, and full of general instruction for us. Let us seek, with God's help, to learn them, and profit by them.

And first, we may see here the blessedness of our

redeemed life. It is not, my brethren, merely that for us there is a promise of future restoration; doubtless such promises are ours, and they are absolutely needful for our stay and solace through the trials and sorrows of this our earthly life. In one sense we are still afar from our rest. Blessed be God we know well that Heaven shall be most unlike this earth: into it shall intrude none of those many afflictions by which the souls of God's true servants are here continually harassed. Those who reach that world "shall have come out of great tribulation." "There shall be no more pain, nor sorrow, nor sighing;" there shall be no more death, either in its first actings of internal decay, or in its stripping bare of this earth, and making hearts long desolate; or in its last sharp violence of agony. Far above all, there shall be no more sin, no more yielding to the enemy, no more clouding the soul, awaking the pangs of conscience, shutting out the light of God's countenance, bringing in the darkness of the pit. When we look at what that state shall be to those who, through God's grace, reach to it, the darkness and desolation of this sinful world seem almost entire and absolute. But it is far otherwise with those who believe in Christ. Even here He is truly with us; He is working in us; we are under His hands; the process of recovery is going on, painful often in its course, yea, even the "dividing asunder of soul and body," yet

most surely going on, already. Through Him who is in us, the holy beings of God's unsullied creation receive us back into their shining ranks. This earth is the portal of Heaven. It is upon this truth that the reality of what we are doing this day absolutely turns. It is because this earth is not abandoned; because in the Church of the redeemed we can even here glorify God; that we are setting apart this place to His service. We need not wait till we reach Heaven to glorify Him; wonderful as it is that so it should be, we can even here praise Him. Through the indwelling and intercession of Christ we can offer up praises in which the heavenly hosts can join. The dull earth, which has been so long a stranger to His praise, breaks forth again into singing; its silver and gold, its graven stones and carved work, these are no longer to minister merely to man's comfort, or honour, or device; they are set apart to the glory of the Highest. When the Church of the Lord takes possession of them in His name, when the company of the faithful is gathered together, pleading His promise, then in very deed Christ is amongst them; then the mere element of water becomes the instrument through which He works the marvels of His regenerating power; then the mere natural substances of bread and wine become, through His power, the outward means whereby His spiritual presence feeds and nourishes and quickens the souls of those who believe in Him. We are here in God's very presence; His holy Angels mingle in our services, His eternal Son gives Himself to us, His coeternal Spirit is indeed in the midst of us. And this sheds a light upon all our life. When we leave this place we carry with us His presence. Our commonest works may be done to Him. In all we think, and speak, and do, we may "glorify God in our body and in our spirit, which are His."

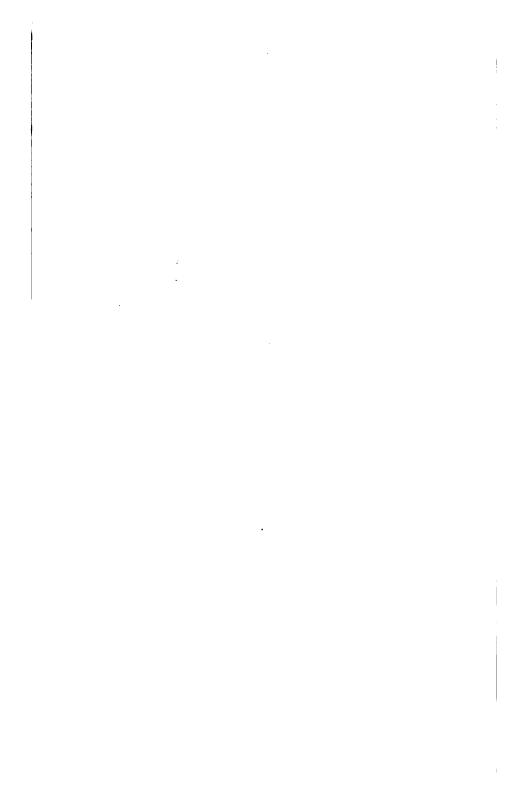
And this same thought, my brethren, may shew us also the awfulness of our redeemed life. That life must be awful which is spent in such a presence, which is leading to such issues, which is governed by such powers. Oh! that we could but for a moment banish from our eyes these empty shadows of things present, which we mistake for what is real, and see the marvels of the spiritual kingdom which are indeed around us. Surely if we could see within this very Church to-day God's mighty Angels waiting to join in our praises, to unite with us in the adoration of the whole Church, and mingle with our thanksgivings their Hallelujahs, we should be altogether ashamed of the cold, unmeaning, wandering devotions which we so often offer up; surely we should strive to hallow this place, whensoever we enter it, by a more earnest and faithful lifting up of our souls to Him. And this same temper would then, through His grace, go forth with us to all our employments. We should, by degrees, learn to feel and know that we are ever under His hand, that, in our most common actions, we are in His presence; that His holy Angels are looking on us, in our weary strivings with sin; that their hands are, as it were, continually held out to draw us up towards Heaven; and that the dark powers of hell, on the other side, are fiercely snatching for our souls. We should then see how awful a blessedness it is to have been redeemed, to have had Christ's mark stamped upon us, Christ's breath breathed on us, Christ's prayer offered for us, Christ's words spoken to us, to have His very indwelling; to be capable of such wonderful guilt as defying His Spirit, as polluting that which He has made His Body, of rejecting His Grace, of trampling on His Blood. We should see what, in His sight, are those mysteries of evil which we are wont to call our little sins. We should see what our past sins are, how dark their stain, how heavy their burden, how depressing their load, until they are indeed washed out (as they may be) altogether, in that blood which He shed for us; till His own gracious hand has lifted us out of the mire and slough in which we have chosen to wallow: till He has made ours, by kindling in us a living faith in Him as our Righteousness, that remission of sins, into which He, of His great mercy, has suffered us to be Baptized.

Lastly, let us see here the only condition through

which such as we are can attain to unity with God's holy creatures, or even with one another. It is only through union with Christ our Lord that this can be ours. It is only as denying and renouncing our own state of sinful separation from Him; it is only so far as by a lively faith we cling to Him;—to Him, that we may be pardoned, justified, and sanctified, by true living union with Him, the righteous one;—that we can draw nigh again to any of His holy creatures. All lower laws of union are inadequate to that purpose; for they cannot reach to the master evil, and cause of separation. All sin is the essence of self-will, and self-worship; and self-will separates every reasonable soul in which it reigns from the holy brotherhood, who love, as their first law of being, the One All Holy My brethren, let us learn to-day something at least of this great truth; let us see it in the Church around us. There also all self-will is THE cause of division: there union with Christ is THE law of internal union. For the Church is His Body, and it is as we claim for ourselves in act and deed, and thought and feeling, union with Him, that we are held close to its unity. Let us endeavour to see this practically; not to think of the Church as an abstraction, but as His Body, and ever more to see Him in it; to see His presence and sure working in the sacraments of His grace; His glory in

worship; a drawing together in Him in united services; His indwelling in the Communion of His saints; to see that division is indeed a rending of His Body, that it is the fruit of self-will; to see that we may be drawn on to the most fearful divisions, under the very pretence of yielding to conscience and following His leading, if once we allow self-will to mingle with our religion. For manifold and most ensnaring are its delusions. We seem, it may be, to be giving up all for Christ, when we are indeed giving up much, in order to keep that which is dearest of all to fallen man, our own self-will; and so we are being led far from Him, and becoming an offence to His people, whilst we dream of following most closely after Him. Above all, let each one seek more earnestly for the reality of personal union with Him; let us pray Him to work His work within us; let us see that in nothing we interrupt His working. us seek to be stamped with His Image, to be anointed with His Spirit, to be transformed to His Will, that so we may more and more be drawn into unity with His Body mystical, and find our place prepared for us in that "general assembly and Church of the first-born, whose names are written in Heaven."

LITTLEMORE:
PRINTED BY ALEXANDER AMBROSE MASSON.



STRENGTH OUT OF WEAKNESS.

A SERMON

PREACHED BEFORE THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD.

ON ALL SAINTS DAY,
NOV. 1, 1848,

ON THE OCCASION OF THE

JUBILEE OF THE CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

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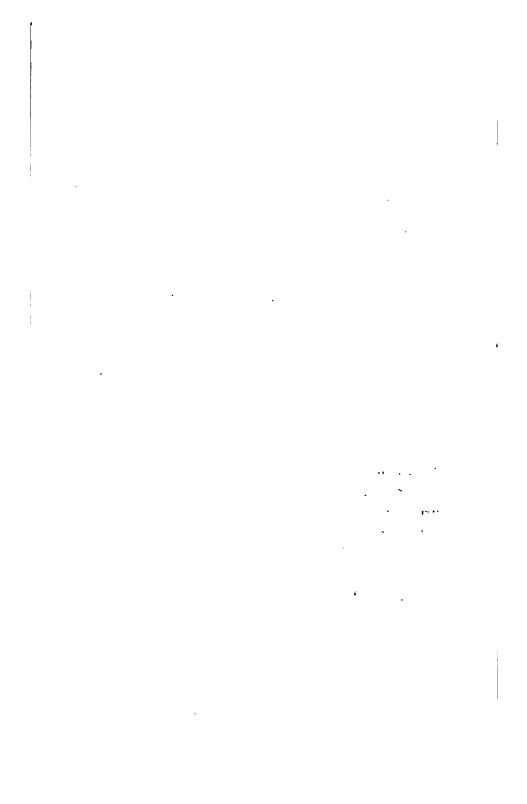
SAMUEL, LORD BISHOP OF OXFORD,

LORD HIGH ALMONER TO THE QUEEN, CHANGELLOR OF THE MOST NOBLE ORDER OF THE GARTER.

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Нев. хі. 34.

Who out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

Week after week since the year began have we paused on successive holidays to acknowledge with humble gratitude to God the grace given to one or another of the great Saints who, like the brighter stars amid the countless hosts of Heaven, draw to themselves all eyes by their surpassing lustre.

And now we close the yearly calendar with the common mention of that innumerable multitude of whom these were the first-fruits, and who now, with them, have entered on the rest of Paradise, and the waiting for their Lord. And in doing this we are surely declaring in open act our full accord with that inspiriting declaration of our creed, "I believe in the Communion of Saints." For herein we declare that it is not

only with the great Saints with whom we claim a living fellowship; into whose inheritance of sufferings, of deeds, and of prayers, we have entered; but that there is a communion between all the true Saints of Christ; that we claim kindred with all; that we bless God for all "departed this life in His faith and fear:" and would not omit our duteous thanksgiving for His mighty grace vouchsafed to them, even though it may be that their light was noticed but by few; and though their separate memory has passed away wholly from the earth.

So that we are brought to-day to this doctrine of the Communion of Saints: and a glorious doctrine it is; kindling within our hearts, if it please God the Holy Ghost so to work upon us, more earnest desires after humiliation and watchfulness, and trust, and powers of active service. For whilst it is good for us to be continually set alone in things spiritual; whilst it is true that religion is to each one of us so personal a matter that there can be no soundness in it, unless we are, in the singleness of our own spiritual being, often thus alone with God; yet is it true also that He has placed us in a company—in a goodly company—of His children; that there are of His ordering many steps before us on the waste over which we have to pass; that though upon it for

our special comfort far beyond all other aids are left the foot prints of the Lord our Saviour when, as the Virgin-born, He too traversed its dry and sandy places; yet that, besides this, our gracious God, lest our courage should fail or our endurance faint, has set before us an unnumbered company of all ages and conditions, who were once tried by all our weaknesses and beset by all our dangers, but who have held on even to the end, and won that rest for which we long. So that no man, be his consciousness of weakness or the strength of temptation, or the crowd of his dangers what they may, can ever think that there has befallen him "any temptation but such as is common to man;" any sorrow, any trial of his faith, any weakness of his heart, but such as have been known to others, and have been by that Grace which may be his, over-ruled even for the furtherance of their salvation.

But it is not only thoughts of comfort which should be suggested to us by our contemplation of the communion of Christ's Saints. We should be urged by it to a more diligent watchfulness against those besetting sins which may hinder our own salvation. As the unbroken fellowship of God's elect rises before our eyes, from the weakest, who is faithfully struggling in His strength against temptation, up to those who

bright with the crown of martyrdom have long ago passed out of our earthly sight into His sheltering Paradise, we should be led more earnestly to strive, "lest a promise being left us of entering into His rest any of us should seem to come short of it." For this is the true use of such a contemplation, as it stands before us in the very words of inspiration; "therefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses" (to the faithfulness of God) "let us lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race which is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith." Let us see that we do indeed share their course, that we may share with them their end.

Thus it becomes us for our own instruction to note carefully the marks of fellowship with Christ which we can trace in them. Many are set before us in this passage, but none perhaps more full of instruction than those which this verse sets before us, when it tells us that they "out of weakness were made strong."

For first, how universal was the presence of this mark, in each of its two especial parts; of weakness growing into strength. Look back in thought on all. How surely did all begin in weak-

ness. What signs of its presence were sometimes shewn most unexpectedly. How was Samuel chosen in the weakness of childhood, and how was even that childhood strengthened till it bore all the burthen of the prophet's office? How was Moses called amid great straits of external difficulty and internal self-distrust, and how was he made able to endure the burden of all the multitude, that gainsaying and stiff-necked generation which was committed to his guidance? how did the weakness from which they were being rescued shew its remaining presence in the partial unbelief of Abraham, and the deep fall of David, and in St. Peter's denial of his master? Yet how manifestly was there a process of strengthening going on in each one of these very Saints, even until they were perfected. How firm was the faith of Abraham—how dear to David was the Will of God. How strong was the courageous love of this same Peter, who once had trembled before a maid-servant, but who learned afterwards to depart from the council, rejoicing that he was counted worthy to suffer shame for Christ's name.

And now mark next, how in all who bear the true mark, this marvellous change is accomplished. Manifestly by a power beyond themselves — for out of weakness they "were

made strong." It was not of their own doing. It was not that strength grew in them by the natural progress of their own character. True. it did grow up by degrees, in the due use of common opportunities; as they resisted ordinary temptations, and triumphed over sins of daily incursion and familiar presence. But still the mark is this, they were made strong. A power out of themselves was moulding them; a higher Will was drawing up into its own blessed truth the lower and capricious actings of their own weakened, dishonoured, and distorted will. A mighty love was brooding over and transforming The actings of that Holy Spirit to which they yielded was renewing and sanctifying. He strengthened them to resist temptation, and in resisting it. And then observe, further, what there was in them which thus brought them under the working of His strengthening power. All this chapter speaks of it; but it is gathered up intofewest words. All this mystery of strength is revealed in this one utterance,—"Who through This was the mighty talisman which wrought thus in them. For this brought to them the strength which is irresistible. Their faith was the hand which for them laid hold on God. With more or less of clearness, as God had revealed it to them, they saw that He had laid

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help for them upon One that was mighty: and they clave to Him, and in them the mystery was accomplished: they sought to cast themselves in their weakness upon Him: and His mighty Presence stood beside them. The bright cloud overshadowed them, and they trembled as they entered into it, and often they wist not what to say; but they clave to Him, and they were made strong. His work went on in them. He was in them, and they who without Him could do nothing, found His strength perfected in their weakness.

Here, then, we may learn our first lessons. In each one of the Saints this is the pattern character. Every one passes from weakness into strength through cleaving for himself to Christ. Let this day's remembrance of that glorious company lead us to a close examination whether this note of fellowship with them is plain upon ourselves. Do we know in our own lives the great Christian paradox, "When I am weak, then am I strong?"a Do we know that he is weak who deems himself strong. That he is strong whose conscious weakness drives him to the Lord for strength? Do we feel daily, hourly, in the depths of our nature, that self dependance and self exaltation are the thingswhich make us utterly weak? That as we acquiesce in a life in which they rule, we acquiesce in helpless weakness; that as we are led off by anything from an earnest clinging to Our Lord, for all we hourly need, for Pardon, and Cleansing. and Grace, and Renewal, we are led away from the only means whereby we can be strong? we see that in Him we may be strong? And so that no sin can be allowed in us, because we may have His strength against it? And do we, in the consciousness of utter weakness strengthen ourselves in Him? Do we, when it seems to us that our burden is heavier, or our strife sorer, or our temptations fiercer than those of every other man:—do we then remember that so it has seemed in their hour of trial to all the Saints of Do you strive to fly to the thought of Christ? His love, who "keepeth the feet of His Saints?" If, indeed, His love were less than infinite—if it ever slumbered—if there were any stains which the blood of Christ could not wash out—if "anything were too hard for the Lord," then might we all despair. But let us look at the golden line of His redeemed, and take courage. He loved them with an everlasting love, therefore in loving kindness did He gather them. And what they were that we are—weak, faltering, unworthy, tempted

b 1 Samuel ii. 9.

^c Genesia xviii, 14.

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souls, far beneath His love, infinitely unworthy of His care, ever ready to sink before any enemy, to be over-mastered by every temptation; ever ready to fall away utterly, yet held up by His hand; and from the crumbling brink of perdition brought safely through to crowns and to His Oh, unutterable wonders of the presence. loving kindness and faithfulness of God! mysterious deep of His counsels of redemption! Oh, blessed work of the life-giving cross, and bitter agony of Christ our Lord! Oh, glorious hope for every one who cleaveth closely to His righteous life for acceptance and for strength! This day does indeed bring very nigh unto us these stupendous wonders of His love. in our weakness, and these His perfected, are all Already from the weary trembling strife they who are one body with us have been lifted up to rest in paradise. And if we cleave to-Him we shall not long be left in these dungeon garments, and this far distant banishment.-The long procession winds its appointed way; in it are not only mighty servants of our God, holy Apostles, noble martyrs, undaunted confessors; but all His Saints; our own dead in Christ; those with whom we have trembled, and wept, and prayed, and given thanks, and communicated; they too are there. Only let us press in, and through God's grace we shall find our places in those ranks; and for us too shall be fulfilled, even to the uttermost, the blessed word, and we also shall be counted amongst those "who through faith in Christ out of weakness were made strong."

But there is another application of this truth, which we may profitably make; for this which we have seen to be a special note of the separate spiritual life of every Saint of God, is also the character of the corporate acts of the Church which is their common body. From her earliest planting this note has been especially stamped upon all which has concerned her spread and Thus, when our Blessed Lord Himup-growth. self, in His earthly ministry, gathered in the first fruits of His elect, He so veiled His glory in the likeness of our flesh, that in Him there was for the common eye of men no "beauty that we should desire Him;"d and so, plainly, He meant that it should be with those who bore His commission to their brethren. His chosen followers were fishermen of Galilee; and when He sent out the seventy, He sent them "two and two," with no outward accompaniment of power or presence to challenge the attention of the world. How could the note of an external weakness be

d Isaiah liii. 2.

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more plainly stamped upon the infant Church? A new Jewish teacher in a little corner of the great Roman world had gathered an obscure company around Him. His ministry had continued for a considerable time, when not even "did his brethren believe in Him;" and at last He died an ignominious death, leaving behind Him but a scanty following of the least esteemed amongst His countrymen. Yet what a manifest strength sprung out of all that weakness! How by it had man's redemption been already achieved; how by it was Satan's power to be abated, and God's honour magnified: how through these feeble instruments was the mighty harvest of the earth to be hereafter gathered in! And so it has continued always. The very signs and symbols of the new faith seem chosen specially to mark their own intrinsic feebleness. Water from the spring; the bread and wine of common life. These are made the signs and means of working the most awful changes in the spiritual kingdom. And so it was in the preaching of the Gospel afterwards. "I came not," says St. Paul, "with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God." It was through the "foolishness of preaching" that he sought to "save them that believed;"s and he declared that he was

with them "in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling." Yet did he "labour more abundantly than they all," and his was the preaching, and his were the labours by which more than by any other, the kingdom of the prince of this world was overturned, and the rule of Christ established: "because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men." Surely this was the manifest fulfilling of the word of Christ. For still, as from the first, the Kingdom of God was "like leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened;"1 still was it the growth from the smallest seed of the mighty tree which should shelter in its boughs the fowls of Heaven. And so it has been ever since. It would not be difficult to produce a multitude of instances in which it would be clear that whenever the Church has made any signal advance, it has been not by the strength of any arm of flesh, but through the power of God's Grace working mightily through feeble instruments. So, (to touch merely upon one example,) it was manifestly, when the goodness of our God towards this land enabled His Church here to cast off that long accumulation of cor-

¹ Cor. ii. 3

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 10.

k i. Cor. 1 25.

¹ Matthew xiii. 83.

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ruptions in doctrine, discipline, and conduct which had been heaped upon her truth, and well nigh choked her life. By what unlikely instruments, and with what an apparent feebleness of means, did the arm of God begin and carry through amongst us the blessed work of the Reformation.

So that we may take this as an undoubted mark of His working in His Church, that the work may be seen to be wrought "not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord." So that we may even expect to find the chief instruments of her increase marked with this character, that "out of weakness they have been made strong."

And now, my brethren, let me pray you to apply this text to that Institution to which I am this day specially to call your notice. Look first at its beginning; see how truly upon that was stamped this mark of earthly feebleness.

Its first beginning seems to me even to force back our thoughts to that great seed time of all Christian growth, when the Church was gathered into an upper chamber with the door shut upon it for fear of the Jews. Fifty years ago a handful of parish priests meeting together for mutual edification proposed to form for the

English Church, what then it had not, an organization for direct Missionary work amongst the Heathen in Africa and the East. This was its beginning: and this voice, my brethren, awoke not within the noble temple wherein are enthroned the Primates of our ancient Church: nor in the stately halls wherein the piety of other times has seated them: it did not first sound within either of our two famous Universities; it was spoken amongst men busy with the daily charge of their few sheep in the wide wilderness of our metropolis. What could seem less likely to wake up the slumbering heart of England to this great work of evangelizing the earth?

For it was at a time which seemed in all respects, both within and without, most unpropitious for the effort. It was near the close of one of those periods of which it may be truly said that in it, as to the work of God, "they all slumbered and slept." Within, a heavy lethargy oppressed the Church; without, was the wildest commotion of national disaster. All Europe was convulsed; the great earthquake of the nations shook across her seas this favoured land. She too, as a nation, was apparently unready for the call which reached her. So far from being in

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any wise prepared to allow that all who needed what she had herself received, had in that very want a true claim upon her loving sympathy, she was not yet prepared to abandon her own share in that most accursed traffic which rolled continually across the seas from Africa to her West India colonies, the groans of the enslaved, and the avenger's cry of blood. Yet at such a time this whisper of a voice was heard. And the good hand of God had already fitted some of England's senators to listen to its faintest accents, and amongst them chiefly one° who had seen British India for himself, and sighed over its abominations; one whose birth and family connected him with the merchant princes of this land, but whose new birth led him to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; and another9 (for history must speak what a son's reverence would rather muse upon in silence) who had already learned to live for others, and had received from God's hands the clientship of tortured Africa. But even with this aid, small and seemingly insufficient was that early company. Yet it had within it the true principle of strength. For those designs sprung from a simple desire to obey the great precepts of Christ's gospel, to ° Charles, Grant, Esq. He did not actually sit in Parliament

till 1802.

P Henry Thornton, Esq. 4 W. Wilberforce, Esq.

act in His strength, to declare His name, by His appointed instruments to those who sat in He of whom I have spoken, and darkness. who was looked to as their earliest head. at the desire of all, sought at once to put the projected institution into the closest relations with the fixed organization of the Church, and to commit to her Primate the keeping of that post he had been asked to fill. the time for this was not fully come. of weakness" was the law of its beginning, though having within it the true principle of faith, that further word was step by step accomplished, and "out of weakness it was made strong." For so, with humble thankfulness to God, we may surely say this day it is. For today we keep its Jubilee; and that it should have survived till now, this is a great matter. Yea, and this is not all, but from that smallest seed how fruitful are the branches which have unfolded all their goodly proportions. It has grown strong in all the material instruments needful for its labour. Its income, insufficient as it is for the work which has grown up under its hand, has vet under His blessing, whose only is the increase, been swollen from a rill into a river: its friends are no more shut into a single chamber, but spread to-day the lengthened chain of thanks!

giving and prayer and offering from the farthest Australasia to the Islands of the Western It has moreover been continually Indies. drawn up more and more into the actual organization of the Church. Not that herein there has passed any change over its prin-For in principle and in plan it has always been a duteous handmaid of the Church of England. But that, as its operations have been widened, and its character better ascertained. opportunities, withheld from its earlier days, have offered themselves for its acting more completely under the guidance of the heads of the Church at home: whilst the wide increase of the Colonial Episcopate has allowed it to labour in many of its fields of work, under resident Bishops abroad. And to mark one more, and that in some respects the chiefest, sign of strength bestowed upon it, God has prospered its labours with no scanty measures of actual success. Amidst what confident predictions of undoubted failure—what Ishmael mockings of the true heir by the son of the bond-woman—were those labours first commenced? How have the results vindicated those who ventured on those labours in a simple faith in Christ's word, with a single trust in the power of His Gospel wherever it is preached in its unadulter-

ated purity, to reach under the teaching of His Spirit the deep cravings of man's heart, and by bringing him to Christ the Lord to overthrow the strongholds of the enemy. Look at the Islands of New Zealand, now a Christian Bishopric; hear the songs of praise to Christ the Lord, rising in the Maorie tongue amongst those coral reefs of the Antipodes; or look to Southern India waiting for the word of Christ, stretching forth her hands to God, saying (as did one of old in vision), "Come over and help us;" look to that glorious Tinivelly mission to which such glorious witness has been borne by the Bishop of that district; or look again to that first great practical redress of the wrongs done to Africa by England, the Christian settlement of Sierra Leone; look to the 13,010 communicants gathered by this Society from amongst the heathen; look, I would say, above all, to the great fact that it has begun by a company of native Priests, Deacons, and Catechists, not merely to spread the truth of Christ by foreign lips, but to reproduce the Church through an indigenous ministry, and say, I pray you, whether you can doubt that "out of" that its early "weakness" this Institution has been "made strong," when in these spiritual children given to its prayer and labours God has poured so

largely on it the blessing of "the man who hath his quiver full of them." Surely when with humble gratitude to God, of whom alone cometh all the increase, we thus survey the triumphs won within these fifty years from amongst the very strongholds of the kingdom of Satan, we may venture to take to ourselves all the words of this our text, and say, "who... by faith out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, put to flight the armies of the aliens."

And if these things be so, suffer me, before I stop, to draw from them some few practical conclusions.

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And surely the first should be, the duty of co-operating with this Institution. I have said that since its day of early weakness God has largely increased its funds. But though this is so, they are still utterly inadequate for the work in which it is engaged. It is indeed a humbling thought, that all which seems now to prevent the christianizing of Southern India is the lack of funds to supply that Christian Ministry which it actually begs for at our hands. Now, if the aim of this Society be pure, if its organization be according to the will of Christ, if the spiritual return of its labours be thus certain, if God has set on it the seal of His visible blessing, and if its needs be

Paalm exxvii. 5.

thus great, I confess I see not how we can any one of us be blameless if we refuse our aid towards its labours. I would earnestly entreat you who hear me to look with an honest resolution into your means and expenditure, and see as in God's sight whether without reducing any gifts of Christian charity to other causes, you could not in some measure give your aid to this. And if so I would pray you to ask yourselves yet further, whether if you give not to the great necessity of these your heathen brethren, there be not real danger, that they "cry unto the Lord against you, and it be sin unto you." Whether if from selfindulgence, or carelessness, or love of money, or a baseless prejudice, you take not that share to which God invites you in this work of love, you may not indeed be starving your own souls, by tempting Him to curse your blessings, and to dry up by a secret wasting in their channels, His gifts of grace around yourselves.

But another and yet broader consequence seems to me to follow from the conclusions which we reached before, and that is not merely the duty of co-operation with this Society, but of great zeal for Christian missions. If any thing is written plain upon our national capacity and habits, it surely is that God has committed largely to us the duty of evangelizing the earth.

For what other purpose has He set this little island as the mistress of the seas, made her the market of the habitable globe, given to her an entrance into every haven, bidden every wind which breathes under His heaven waft back to her some of those good gifts which His gracious prodigality of love pours even on this fallen earth; for what other purpose has He given to our hardy, earnest, practical Saxon race, with all its love of home, a restless longing for foreign adventure; for what other purpose has He opened to our traffic the teeming multitudes of China, given to our charge the islands of the sea, meted out to us the ancient plains of Hindostan, seated us at either end of torrid Africa, and planted us of old in the islands of the West; for what other purpose does He now bid us people the great continent of Australasia; for what above all has He given to us a purer faith and greater light than He has vouchsafed to other nations, but that we should be His messengers to every people, His witnesses to every land? And how can our land flourish, or our Church abound in Grace, or we be strong and rich ourselves in all the gifts on which depends the nourishment of the spiritual life, if we know not the time of our visitation, and answer not to all His purposes concerning us.

And in this work there is a special charge for us who partake of His goodness in the blessings vouchsafed to us through this University. For first, they who go not hence to take their part by personal service in its conduct, still can, and therefore should, give it their active help. Besides acting as collectors for its funds, (in which some may and, thank God, do aid it,) there are special services which should be rendered by a body such as ours. If the full powers with which Christendom has been endued, are really to be used for the deliverance of the Heathen. there must be many labours of the closet at home. given to aid the working of the labourers abroad. Though Heathenism is in some quarters of the earth an ignorant and savage superstition, it is in others a subtle and refined system of sensuality and Deism, built up with all the buttresses and ramparts which perverted intellect can raise. As it still has its barbarous Phrygia, so has it yet its polished Athens.

Now, in contending against these the student at home may most effectually aid the missionary abroad. And where, if not from our own University, should issue such assistance? Surely we, as presiding over so fair a portion of Christian literature, ought to put forth to aid the distant labourers, not only the works which will enable him, at

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less cost of time and strength, to acquire the various languages he needs, but also accurate and thoughtful estimates of the peculiarities of each false creed he must assault, with all the arguments against it which learning and Christian dialectics will supply, gathered together as in some well-furnished armoury, bright and burnished for immediate use.

But whilst this were much, may we not, my brethren, trust that this our University may yet do more? Have we none amongst us who will give THEMSELVES to this great work? Oh, when shall that Holy Spirit of our God, which woke up of old Apostles and Evangelists, so breathe upon us too in this our day, that amongst us shall be found men saying, from a simple love to Christ their Lord and these their brethren, "Here am I, send me?" When shall the great ventures of a living faith abound amongst us? When shall some of us win the glory of confessing Christ, in open conflict even unto death if need be, "resisting unto blood, striving against sin?" shall some who have been nourished with us in our sacraments, and strengthened by our prayers, go forth to be the founders in some distant land of some native church; to be through God's Grace great in our day, as were Paul and Silas,

Isaiah vi. 8. Hebrews xii. 4.

and Apollos, yea, and all the Apostles who, of old time, being "scattered abroad, went every where preaching the Word."

This is what we chiefly need: and surely it is not too much to hope that this may be granted to us. Our institutions here signally favour such ventures of Christian love. We have fellowships actually held on the condition of such service. Why should not some of those who are here fitting themselves for the Christian ministry resolve to give themselves, at least for a time, to such labours; to face their harder trials at least for some years? In worldly professions men undertake such tasks: why should they do less in the service of Christ? Great on all sides would be the blessings which would flow from such sacrifices. Missionary labour, from its very nature, gives room for, and therefore requires the fullest exercise of the highest powers of soul and intellect. And surely we might look for God's larger blessing, where greater sacrifices were laid humbly on His altar. From such a course, therefore, we might reasonably look for great results in the direct spread of the Gospel. Nor need we, with all our home necessities, grudge these labourers to the Heathen world. For we should share largely in their blessing. It is an universal law of God's Providence

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and Grace, that in blessing others we are blest our-"There is that scattereth, and yet inselves. creaseth."x The Church which put forth such labourers would, through many channels, receive back again Her sure return of blessings. She would escape many dangers which have peculiarly tried ourselves. For it is to a great degree in matters spiritual, as it is in civil. God has bestowed His gifts on men in measures, and by laws so diverse, that he who in one position suffers himself, and injures others, might, in another, use for the eminent advantage of all these, very powers which now make him mischievous and miser-And there are within our body, men able. for whom we need such vents of Christian daring-men in whose souls mighty currents are stirring; whom God is indeed calling by an inward voice to some act of great devotion to His service—but who from not simply obeying that inward voice grow restless, dark, and dissatisfied first with themselves, and then with all around them-who perhaps at last impetuously turn into some worldly channel the energies which might have made them Saints of God; or who sink weakly down into triflers, or who are soured and turn Cynics, or who under the cravings of that morbid appetite for some greater stimulus

^{*} Proverbs xi. xxiv.

which belongs to such a state, give themselves with a full swing of soul to that superstitious and corrupt communion of the papacy, which ever lies in wait, and alas, often too successfully, for such dissatisfied and restless spirits.

But this deliverance from actual danger, is far from all the blessings we should gain from thrusting forth into the ripening field of the expectant earth our due share of labourers. Even as the planting of a vigorous colony strengthens by a reflex action the mother nation, so does the planting of a daughter Church return of God's mercy in unnumbered blessings into the bosom of her Mother. In the widened communion of her prayers, in the fuller assertion of her principles, in the mutual interchange of loving offices, in the mutual stirring up of zeal and faith, and simplicity of doctrine, in these and a thousand other ways is such a work for God rewarded. Nor is this all: for each one who so goes forth trusting simply in the pure word of God, and with earnest love to Him in whose cleansing blood is all his hope, leaves, irrespective of his ultimate success, a track of light behind him, which allures many more to follow in his course. Who can doubt-to mention no living men, even though their honoured names rush upon our lips,-who can doubt but that

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when the Sister University sent forth to foreign lands the ripened intellect, the simple faith, and burning holiness of Henry Martyn, she did more for herself, yea, and for the whole Church, in holding up to others the brightness of his saintly life, than she would have done if for any lapse of years she had selfishly monopolized his labours.

And for themselves, surely, with all their sacrifices, such men make a blessed choice. Who ever served Christ in vain? Who ever left for Him houses or lands, or brethren or sisters, or wife or children, and did not surely find himself even in this life most richly overpaid? Is not He better than all His gifts? Who that has ever heard, indeed, His voice, would not quit all so that he might more closely follow Him? Who has ever tasted of His love, and knows not that He can and does sustain with such bounties as this dull earth knows not, every one who will go forth into the wilderness, trusting unto Him? Oh, blessed venture! Oh, sure and abundant recompense! Of such is all that goodly company, of whom we now make mention, who "follow the Lamb whithersoever He Penitents, Saints, Confessors, Margoeth." tyrs, Apostles, this note is on them all. "Out of weakness," they "were made strong;" from weak resolutions; through many a strife with sin and

with themselves—in prayers, in watchings, and in self denial; by a deepening sense of evil in themselves; by a more earnest crying for His power to last it out; by a quickened thirst for Holiness, with a more single eye to Him—by a meeker, humbler, more trusting love He drew them to Himself, and as He drew them they were "made strong." In His strength they wrought out their day of service; and when that short day was quickly spent, of His mere mercy, they received from the hand which saved them the "crown of glory which fadeth not away."

7 1 Peter v. 4.

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DELIVERED AT

LLANDINGAD CHURCH, LLANDOVERY,

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BY THE WARDEN,

JOHN WILLIAMS, M.A. F.R.S.E.

ARCHDEACON OF CARDIGAN, ETC. ETC.

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THOMAS PHILLIPS, ESQ.

BRUNSWICK SQUARE, LONDON,

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Discourse

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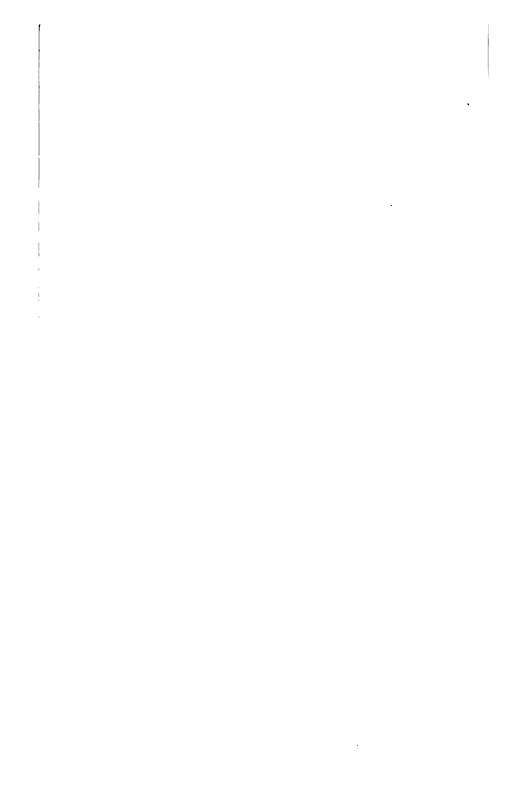
Welsh Education,

IS REGARDED

BY THE AUTHOR,

JOHN WILLIAMS.

Llandovery, May 16, 1848.



A DISCOURSE, ETC.

PSALM 137, VERSES 5, 6.

IF I FORGET THEE, O JERUSALEM, LET MY RIGHT HAND FORGET HER CUNNING. IF I DO NOT REMEMBER THEE, LET MY TONGUE CLEAVE TO THE ROOF OF MY MOUTH; IF I PREFER NOT JERUSALEM TO MY CHIEF JOY.

I have prefixed to the following Discourse these heart-felt expressions of the inspired poet of Judah, not with the intention of explaining them theologically, but from a wish to commence my present address, by alluding to those sentiments of which the words of my text are so vivid an expression. They describe with a pathos which cannot be surpassed, the feelings with which a Jewish captive, serving a hard master in the river-fed plains of Mesopotamia, recurred to the scenes of his earlier years, to that mountain girdle which encircled and still encircles his native Sion, and where he still loved to dwell at least in the pleasing illusions of imagination. The feelings which suggested the words to the lamenting exile, are holy in their nature, and among the purest which God has implanted in the heart of man, and their violation by some act of treason against our kinsmen according to the flesh, has in all ages and in all countries been regarded as an offence not easily to be pardoned, not soon to be forgotten; they have been cherished by the wise as a strong stimulant to honourable action, and the good have regarded them as no slight protection of social happiness.

Yet it has been alleged that the Gospel dispensation allows no place for these feelings, that in the Christian code of duty there is a deficiency under this head, and that the

virtue of patriotism in its original signification is not inculcated as a portion of His system, either by the Saviour himself or the chosen interpreters of His will.

As a general truth, we may perhaps accept this allegation, for it would be easy to imagine cases in which it might be the first duty of a Christian to abjure all such feelings, and to look upon his kinsmen according to the flesh as the fiercest foes to his spiritual progress. Yet admitting this, it may be justly said that independent of direct precepts the Christian has other guides in the performance of his relative duties, that in the example of the greater saints described in Holy Writ, and especially in the perfect model placed before us in the life and actions of our blessed Saviour, lights are held out to us, by which we may direct our course in all doubtful circumstances.

Should we therefore look to our Saviour's career on earth, we must conclude that He regarded His brethren according to the flesh, as entitled to higher privileges, as far as His own personality was concerned, than any other descendants of our common father Adam.

It was a daugther of Judah and female representative of the house of David, the most glorious and renowned monarch who ever reigned over Israel, who was chosen to be the blessed mother of the Lord of life. It was to Bethlehem, the native village of the same great king, that the honour was assigned of becoming the birth-place of "the Prince of Peace," and henceforth a hallowed spot in the memory of all Christian believers.

It was to Jewish Shepherds, who in the adjacent plains were carefully watching their flocks by night, that the announcement was made, stating that to them was born a King greater than either Solomon or his father David, a Shepherd of souls able to save his chosen flock from all extraneous attacks. It was to these sons of Judah, the descendants of Israel and Abraham, that the most glorious of all Anthems was sung, by a multitude of the Heavenly Host, who announced in harmonious strains the glad tidings of salvation,

and that thenceforth there were to be "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth Peace, good will towards men." It was to His kinsmen according to the flesh, that He almost exclusively confined His ministrations upon earth, to them in all His actions He assigned a marked preference, so that every individual chosen during His earthly ministration belonged to the favoured race; and after the resurrection, and after the communication of the Holy Spirit, with all its spiritual and intellectual gifts, when a thirteenth Apostle was to be selected as a special messenger to the Gentile world, that honourable mission was entrusted to the learned disciple of Gamaliel, to Saul, the Benjamite.

Even His very travels after entering upon the active duties of his office, were usually confined to the ancient limits assigned to the possessions of the house of Israel, so that no other portion of this earth was hallowed by his divine presence, except that country, which in consequence of the limited extend of His visitations, has since been called by all Christendom, the Holy Land.

With these impressive facts before us, we need not wonder that in the New Testament there are not to be found any direct precepts, calling upon Christians to practise as a duty those actions which spontaneously spring from the feelings with which every healthy-minded man regards his native land, feelings which if extravagantly indulged, are far more likely to hurry men into excess, than to confine them within the bounds of moderation. But God does not seem to have set his seal of reprobation upon them, when carried apparently to something like a culpable excess, as may be exhibited in the case of Moses, who, although brought up in the Egyptian court, and adopted as a son by the daughter of the Pharaoh of that day, found no pleasure in his courtly position and the privileges accompanying it, but reserved all his sympathies for his oppressed kinsmen, and willingly sacrificed all his worldly prospects rather than betray their cause. And with his feelings in so acting, the inspired author of the Epistle to the Hebrews appears to coincide when he thus

writes;—"By faith Moses when he was come to years refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer afflictions with the children of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt, for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king."

We need not wonder that St. Peter, the first of the Apostles, and to whom was especially entrusted the superintendence of the Israelites according to the flesh, who were also Israelites in spirit, should have confined his first Epistle general to those strangers among the Gentiles, the dispersed Israelites of his day, but it is a very impressive fact that the Great Apostle of the Gentiles, that man of zeal and energy, whom Christ selected as his chosen instrument for the diffusion of his faith among the nations, not included in the covenant with Abraham, should have exhibited so devoted a love and attachment for his unbelieving kinsmen according to the flesh, that he has given utterance to a sentiment, with which we in our cold-blooded selfishness can hardly sympathize; his very remarkable words are these, "I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart; for I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh."+ These are very strong expressions, and without entering into the theological meaning of every word of the quotation it may solely be inferred that his love for his kinsmen, grounded on his connexion with them by race alone, was of the most binding nature. That there might be no mistake respecting at least one source of this predilection, he states the reasons, why his affections were so warmly stirred up in their behalf, by adding, "Who are Israelites, to whom pertained the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the pro-

^{*} Hebrews chap, xi, verse 24. + Rom, chap, ix, verses 1, 2, 3.

mises, whose are the fathers, and of whom according to the flesh Christ came."*

These were great titles to honour and respect, and it is not to be wondered that St. Paul's love of his own race should have grown so vivid, when his thoughts recurred to them. True it is that these great and signal marks of God's favour, eventually proved a snare and stumbling block to the Israelites, both nationally and individually. The peculiar dispensation under which they lived for so long a period, gave rise to prejudices, which are still rank and flourishing in the inmost core of their hearts. A long indulgence in too exclusive a spirit of nationality has isolated them among nations, so that they have practically forgot that "God has made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation." They recognise with pride the wisdom of God in setting their race apart as a "chosen people," destined to cherish the great truths of religion among idolatrous and apostate nations, and to be His witnesses, and the preservers of His oracles, for so long a lapse of ages. But they refuse to acknowledge the same wisdom which made their separation a means and not an end, the portico of a glorious edifice, within which all exclusion was to cease, the walls of separation to be thrown down, and where all the redeemed children of Adam were to be gathered as the sheep of one fold, under the spiritual influence of their one Lord and Saviour.

But the abuse of a beneficial principle is no valid argument against its uses and advantages; the good deducible from its natural influence should be carefully fostered, and all the evils arising from excess be as carefully rejected. The Christian religion with all its catholic maxims, with all its extensive sympathies, does not release the true believer from the full performance of his relative duties to the members of that circle in which he moves, irrespective of any

^{*} Romans chap. ix, verses 4, 5.

other motive than a sense of duty. "It is the brother whom he hath seen, that the Christian is to love, that brother with whom he mingles in the common charities of life, otherwise he cannot love that God whom he hath not seen." He is to visit the fatherless children and widows, within his own reach, and thus to prove that his religion is "pure and unde-And should a man professing himself a Christian neglect, in the universality of his benevolence, to provide for his own immediate family, we are expressly told by the Apostle "That such a man is worse than an Infidel." The man with whom he comes in immediate contact is especially his neighbour, whether he be a Lazarus at his gate, or a wounded traveller by the road side; undoubtedly as his means improve, and his circle of action is enlarged, so also ought his Christian spirit of beneficence to expand and make itself be graciously felt, as far as its influence can safely be extended; our Saviour has left us an awful warning, That sea and land may be encompassed by a zeal not to be wearied, and yet terminate not in the glory of God, but in the destruction of souls. The time-honoured maxim that "True charity should begin at home," although sadly misinterpreted, is nevertheless full of truth and beauty.

But in extending the God-like virtue of charity, there is some danger that we may confine ourselves to a more narrow circle of action, than is prescribed to us by our Christian duty. We are taught by the code of Christian morals to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to pour oil into the wounds of those labouring under any physical misfortune, and by so acting to imitate our Saviour in some part of his beneficent career. But were we to study the whole character of his actions while on earth, we shall find no instance in which he miraculously interfered for the purpose of clothing the naked, and only two instances recorded where the hungry were by him miraculously fed, and that many of his beneficent acts of mercy, even when directed to the supernatural healing of bodily infirmities, were rather calculated to restore to the helpless object the power of providing for his

personal wants, by his own personal labours, than to enable him to live in careless idleness: of this nature were those miracles, by which strength was restored to the withered arm, their natural powers to the paralyzed limbs, and which enabled the blind to see, the deaf to hear, and the lame to walk.

His mission to this world was of a higher character than to heal the casual infirmities of the body. He was to minister that Bread which perisheth not, to open that fountain of living waters, from which whosoever drinks shall not thirst again, to communicate to mankind that sacred knowledge which was "to be a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of his people Israel." To reveal those truths to babes which had been concealed from the wise, and which when received with grace and thanksgiving were certain to make their recipients wise unto salvation. Above all, as the first step in the great work of regenerating a fallen world, He was to purify the hearts, and open the understanding of His Apostles and immediate ministers, and to enable them to understand the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, and to comprehend in all its glory and wisdom, that great scheme of salvation, which was the final result of His voluntary humiliation and sufferings.

And here I must enlarge upon one topic, which requires our especial attention, as it refers to a truth which some of our countrymen, especially in the last generation, seem to have either neglected or forgotten; but which you will permit me to impress upon your minds with sincerity and boldness; we have heard with a spirit of reiteration which has wearied the patience of well informed Christians, that the Apostles and disciples chosen and sent forth by our Saviour were ignorant and illiterate men, that they were deficient in all those qualifications by which men of learning are usually characterized, and that consequently their successors in the ministry need not be more learned than the Apostles themselves were; but a great fallacy is concealed under this form of reasoning.

It is true that at the time when our Saviour first called

them, they answered faithfully to the description above given. It is also true that they continued in the same state, during the whole period of our Saviour's ministry upon earth, when they were distinguished by great want of spiritual feeling, and by an extraordinary ignorance of the real character and true mission of their Lord and Saviour. It is also as true that had they continued in that state, they would, should God have not changed the whole nature of his communion with mankind, have proved utterly unfit for the great work of evangelizing the nations. But our Lord provided against this their original unfitness. He on the feast of Pentecost, forty days after His own Ascension, communicated to them the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Spirit, by the reception of which they instantaneously were made fit instruments for successfully carrying on the great work, entrusted to them by their departed Master. They at once, by an act of the divine will, became masters of those languages, which we of modern times can only partially acquire after great labour and sacrifice of time. They at once became cognizant of the true meaning, and the spiritual import of those precious communications, which in their previous state had been either totally misunderstood or dimly comprehended. came suddenly acquainted with the secret springs, within the human breast, which when once touched, cause the whole soul to vibrate, and harmoniously to respond to the persuasive appeal. Thus qualified and armed with that fearless Spirit, which after the day of Pentecost they invariably displayed, they went forth to their work, fully prepared to meet and battle among their own countrymen the traditional errors of the Pharisee, and the unspiritual creed of the Sadducee, and in the wider field of the heathen world, to encounter the specious fallacies of the Stoic, and the godless theories of the Epicureans. It would be easy to enlarge upon this head, but let it suffice simply to state, that the Apostles, when sent forth on their ultimate mission, were far more learned, more eloquent, more persuasive than any ministers of Christ in our age can hope to become. All this was ac-

complished by an immediate act of his divine power, and the Apostles were sent forth perfect models and specimens of what his leading ministers ought to be in all ages. But still they were only instruments in the hands of that Master who had called and sent them forth; channels of his revelation undoubtedly, but perishable channels, as far as their connexion with this world was concerned. Hence it became necessary that this revelation of the Christian scheme of salvation should be embodied in an imperishable form, to be handed down faithfully to all succeeding generations of Christians. great object was secured by the publication of that written record, that pure and undefiled source of all spiritual knowledge, as revealed by Christ on earth, which we now denominate the New Testament, and which may well be called the ever present representation of the real "Word that was made flesh," and which like its great source is full of "Grace and Truth."

And here again I take the liberty of calling your particular attention to the following fact, which is not I believe so familiar to your minds as it ought to be, and which nevertheless embraces a truth of the greatest importance to every Christian, who wishes to become thoroughly conversant with the real meaning of the "Living oracles" of God's word. The fact to which I allude is this. Although the Hebrew language was the sacred deposit of the older revelation; although in its words alone God's will to man had been communicated through the great legislator of Israel, and the goodly company of the prophets; although in our Saviour's day the Latin language was the authorized tongue of the Roman Empire, the favoured idiom of the masters of the world, yet that revelation which was to make God's will patent to all nations, which was to be commensurate with the moral, intellectual, and spiritual wants, and even aspirations of the mind of man in its most vigorous and regenerated state, was not embodied in the sacro-sanct language of the Hebrews, nor in the state language of imperial Rome. That peculiar distinction was conferred upon the Greek language alone; and for this strik-

ing fact, there must have been an adequate cause; and it would be difficult to assign any other sufficient cause for the divine choice, except the fact well known to all competent judges that the Greek language is the most perfect instrument by which truth, both in its simplest and also in its most abstruse form, can be best communicated to the mind of man. It would have been as easy for the Apostles, and their immediate followers, to have written their histories and letters in any of the numerous languages, which were familiar to their thoughts and lips, by the gift of the Spirit, as in that sole form in which they have been transmitted to us. It might be naturally expected that St. Peter, in directing his spiritual exhortations to the Jewish converts, dispersed among the nations, should have used the sacred language of their common Jerusalem; that St. Paul, in addressing the Christian residents of Rome, should have used the Latin language as the vehicle of his thoughts; that the Galatians should have been rebuked and encouraged in the ancient language of Gaul; and that to the Hebrews at least he should have communicated the extraordinary verification of the types of the ancient covenant in the mission and character of Christ, through those words, and that language, in which they had been recorded by Moses and the Prophets. But if it were so, the fact is unknown to us. As far as we are concerned every communication was made in Greek, for in Greek alone have they have been handed down to us. Such a fact, so contrary to what might naturally be expected, could not have been the result of chance. It must have proceeded from an act of the divine foresight, full both of wisdom and of mercy. this ordinance, which confined the revelation to one language, the work of the theologian is greatly simplified, and a standard of truth constituted from the authority of which no sane Christian can possibly withdraw himself.

When Luther first received a full copy of the Greek Testament, printed with clearness and care, he said with his usual sagacity and terseness,—"The sole work of divines henceforth is clearly to discover the whole truth revealed in

this volume," and so it ought to have been; but mankind are ingenious in error, and in this case have "darkened counsel with many words." Commentaries upon the Scriptures contain fully as large a portion of the reflected spirit of the commentator himself, of his age, and country, as they do of the divine will itself; while the word itself remains for ever an infallible and immutable exponent of the mind of Christ. And this truth is gradually gaining its proper place, nor is it difficult to predict, that the time is not very distant, when all the great questions which are now dividing the Christian world will be decided by the authority of the written word, not dependant on any translation, however excellent (seeing all translations are but human traditions,) but as conveyed to us in the original expressions of Christ and His Apostles. And it is a consolation to know that these original expressions form a portion of a language, of which the principles are so simple, and the framework so scientific, that it can be fully mastered by any individual, who with moderate leisure possesses a clear head and the necessary industry.

Our Saviour could by one act of His will heal the sick, we in our attempts to imitate Him in this respect, are compelled to build infirmaries and maintain hospitals; he by a word could open the eyes of the blind, and make the dumb speak, we however can only by charitable institutions palliate physical evils, which he could instantly remove; he could, with one breath of his Holy Spirit, infuse into his ministers a complete knowledge of that language in which alone his revealed will is embodied; we can attain an adequate knowledge of the same language only by slow process, laborious exertion, and no small expense.

Should a man therefore propose to facilitate the acquisition of a knowledge so necessary to the well informed Christian, he ought to be regarded as the benefactor of his race. And it is the act of such a munificent Christian that has brought us together on this day. Nor is it irrelevant to mention thus publicly, that Thomas Phillips, the benefactor to whom I have alluded, is a man who not only loves our

name and nation, but is also one of ourselves, descended like ourselves from the time-honoured race of the ancient Britons. Feeling the wants of his kinsmen by race and blood, he has founded an Institution, in which his younger brethren according to the flesh should be taught, not only the usual branches of a common education, but should also be rendered accomplished scholars, fully able to comprehend, in its original form, all that the Holy Scriptures contain, for the due edification of the living temple, the Christian soul, in all its vital parts and fair proportions. He has also prepared a course of instruction, which may enable them, if called upon to discharge such duties, fully to explain the important truths, thus acquired, in the popular and much cherished language of their own less favoured kinsmen.

And although the Founder is himself a consistent member of the Church established by law within these realms; and although the friends whom he has employed in carrying his wishes into execution, all belong to the same Church, yet the advantages derivable from the Institution are not to be confined to the children of Churchmen, but may be enjoyed by all whose parents look for their redemption and final salvation to the sole merits of a crucified Saviour. The Founder has no fears that the result of the high education, which as he hopes will be given to the pupils of his Institution, will endanger the stability of the Church to which he is attached, nor subvert the foundation of those principles which he believes to be true. I also willingly acquiesce in these opinions, as I have every reason to know, that the truth which from my boyhood I have been taught to cherish, as a part of my own existence, has nothing to fear, but every thing to hope, from a course of instruction in its highest and most efficient form. I have always felt a deep conviction that my faith was not an untenable form of words, unable to stand the fullest investigation of the enlightened intellect, nor required for its support the stagnation of the mind, and the darkness of ig-I would rather adopt the favourite maxim of the wise men of our race in ancient days, and boldly proclaim

the principle "Y gwir yn erbyn y byd," certain that the final result of all enlightened discussion will be to dispel the mists of ignorance, to establish the feebleness of that light which is not derived from above, to set at nought the inventions of man, and to prove the wisdom of our forefathers, amonst whom the following was a much honoured motto, "Gair Duw yn uchaf." And these allusions to their cherished proverbs, leads me naturally to speak of that race for whose special benefit, within certain limits, the Institution which will date its active existence from the proceedings of this day has been founded.

It is an ancient race, tenacious of its idiosyncrasies, proud of its antiquity, of its language, and peculiar habits and customs. It was known as a native people of this island to the Greek, the Carthaginian, and Phœnician Merchant; with Rome its history has been irrevocably connected, first as a brave opponent in arms; secondly, as a docile ally in peace. After the fall of that Empire, it alone of the conquered provinces renovated its youth and fell back upon the institutions of its own ancestors; it alone emerged from the darkness which succeeded the utter overthrow of Pagan Rome, and appeared on the modern stage, with its name, language, and institutions, unchanged by the lapse of ages, and exhibiting a raciness, not to be destroyed by alien influences and extraneous action.

I regard this of itself as no small privilege, that we, the original possessors of this western corner of the ancient world, can look back through a long vista of ages, and recognise in the pages of ancient history, amidst the renowned characters of past ages, men of our own name and blood; nor do I do this without Scripture warrant. God, through the channels of his holy prophets, ceased not to console the saints of the Old Testament with predictions of the future numbers and

^{* &}quot;The Truth against the world," or "The truth in the face of the world;" for the original will bear either translation.

[&]quot; + The word of God above all things."

greatness of their descendants; and those same descendants are continually reminded that they can claim their descent from ancestors so renowned. Nay more, amidst the terrible denunciations against offending nations, a marked distinction is drawn between those, who were to be entirely swept away by the anger of a justly offended God, and those who were not condemned thus utterly to perish, but were still allowed to stand before God, and remind him of their ancient forefathers.

This promise of abstaining from utter destruction is repeatedly made to the children of Israel, and an assurance given that the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, shall never cease to be represented among the nations of the earth; and their continued and visible existence among us this day, is a convincing proof both of the terrors of his wrath, and of the gracious tenderness of his mercy; of his wrath because they are still scattered among the nations, without a temple, without a public altar, without the incense of the morning and evening sacrifice; of mercy, because they still live among us, imperishable monuments of his long-suffering, and a convincing proof that he still awaits the season of their conversion.

What he thus promised and performed to the Israelites as a nation, he also promised as a favour, a reward, and a privilege to the descendants of an individual, to the race of Jonadab the son of Rechab, because his posterity for several generations had rigidly adhered to the rules of life prescribed to them by their ancestor. God therefore proclaimed to them through his prophets, "That Jonadab the son of Rechab should not want a man to stand before him for ever."

What God promises he never fails to perform. I remember that the following narrative, which I heard from the lips of a gentleman, who was sent from England as an Envoy to the Persian Court, made an indelible impression upon my mind. The Envoy accompanied by a small escort was travelling eastward across the great desert of Arabia, when he and his companions beheld an object, upon the distant verge

of the horizon, which as it gradually approached was discovered to be an Arab warrior, mounted and fully armed. When he arrived within due distance, he was hailed according to the oriental fashion, and called upon to mention his name and tribe. He gave his name with a dignified tone and manner, and added that he was of the lineage and family of Jonadab the son of Rechab, concerning whom the Lord himself had said, "that he never should want a man to stand before him for ever."

We also, my brethren, although without a promise, are a remnant spared by God's mercy, when for their sins he visited our ancestors with heavy punishments; and we ought to regard this merciful abstinence on his part as a signal favour. For of the historical nations within the verge of the Roman Empire, we are almost the sole people which has a national existence within the precincts of our ancient inheritance. Think of the nations that have passed away without leaving any great visible memorial of their past existence. Where are Babylon and her Chaldeans? Where mighty Nineveh and her Assyrian Bands? Where is populous Noe, the Hundred-gated Thebes and her Egyptian warriors? Where are the Pharaohs and the Builders of the still surviving Pyramids? Where are the skilful Sailors of Sidon, and the Merchant Princes of Tyre? Where are now the descendants of the wealthy Tuscans, the flourishing Carthaginians, and the numerous colonies of the Greeks, in Sicily, Italy, Gaul, and Spain? They have all perished; and if we except a few wretched Copts, who still call themselves the descendants of the subjects of the Pharaohs, not an individual of their name and nation can be recognised.

But we, my brethren, have been spared; we still represent the men of ancient history, who dwelt in this land; we are still "Gwyr Dyfed," descendants of the ancient Demetæ, whom the Romans found in possession of these our mountain

^{* &}quot;Viri Demetiæ," Men of Demetia.

homes and vallies. The chief city* of our district still bears that name, which it bore when the geography of our country was described by the learned Ptolemy, and the river which has never ceased to flow through this fertile valley, still bears unchanged the name, + which Roman lips failed exactly to communicate to the Alexandrian Geographer. We ought to regard this as a privilege, and a special mark of God's favour, by which he testifies that he has not altogether for-And I would humbly ascribe this singular mark of God's favour, not to the valour of our gallant wariors, not to the fortresses of our native land, for South Wales is singularly void of natural fortresses, not to the eloquence of our persuasive speakers, not to the musical charms of our ancient melodies, not to the fiery war-songs of our mediæval bards, not to the gentler influences of our more modern poets, but to that unshaken fidelity with which as a nation we have cherished that Christian faith, which in the Apostolical age was preached in this island, and warmly embraced by our progenitors.1

It may safely be affirmed that the British Church, together with her child in the faith, the ancient Church of Ireland, retained, with a fidelity unknown to other portions of the Western Church, that form of sound words, which they had inherited from their Apostolical instructors, and that more of the dangerous principles, which finally ripened into the deadly errors of Papal Rome, may be traced to the agency of the monk Augustine and his companions, than to the influence of any member of the British Church. All the special errors adopted by Rome during the progress of the fifth and sixth century were unknown to the Britons, and they justly regarded as suspicious innovations, practices which were unknown to their earlier instructors in the faith. And

^{*} Maridunum, Caermarthen. † The Towy, which the Romans called Tobius. ‡ For a proof of this assertion, ace my Essay entitled "Claudia and Pudens," where other truths respecting our race and Church may also be found.

yet, for refusing to adopt practices so questionable in their origin and indifferent in their nature, or rather for not conceding spiritual obedience to a stranger, who possessed no national claim to their allegiance, our ancesters were pronounced contumacious and heretical, and had a long course of persecutions to endure from the Anglican emissaries of Rome. These did not cease until the Reformation dawned upon England, when, as a Church and a nation, we rejoiced in the coming day; and as we never had been attached to the doctrines and practices of Rome, we shook off its tyrany, and the Rome-imposed abuses, with one slight effort.

On this head it may be briefly recapitulated, that we received the faith from a pure source; that we preserved it pure for centuries; that we never ceased to protest against the assumed authority and strange doctrines of the Church of Rome; that when better times arrived, we joyfully joined the party of the Anglican Reformers, adhered to our ancient faith, which by God's grace we still hold, and by God's aid will continue to maintain and uphold.

I am not discouraged in this expectation, that our faith will continue to be sound by the fact that a more gloomy view of our Christian state as a people may be entertained by persons who know no more of us, than what can be gleaned from the reports lately published of certain Commissioners, who were engaged by Government to examine the state of general education in Wales. Of these gentlemen I would speak with all the respect due to them, as emissaries of the executive power commissioned to perform duties of a very delicate nature. But still I must confess that, making all due allowance for the mistakes, into which as strangers to our habits and language they were very likely to fall, their charity does not partake of the Apostolical character, for it certainly has not prevented them from exposing "a multitude of sins." They have certainly laid very bare a state of things, which need strong remedies, but which have been unaccountably allowed to proceed from bad to worse, until, if we can believe their statement, any change of the present system would be desirable.

Undoubtedly some practices described by them as prevalent among our people, are detestable and abominable. They ought to be amended, and as a Church and a people we ought to join in setting upon them the seal of our common reprobation; we ought publicly to confess them before our congregations, and call upon them to aid us in amending them before God and man.

I have a personal knowledge, acquired by a longer intercourse with the people of England and Scotland, of the vices and virtues of the more neglected portion of the community, in these our sister countries, than these gentlemen could possibly have acquired during their official investigations; and I have no hesitation in saying, that whether we consider crimes as dangerous to social order, or destructive of good principles in the breast of the individual, I would, if like David I were called upon to make a wretched choice between certain evils, prefer a conviction under the indictment framed by the Commissioners against my kinsmen according to the flesh, than under the charges which, as I know, might legitimately be pressed against the members of the dangerous classes in England and Scotland. We, my brethren, have escaped the higher charges of blood-guiltiness, of adultery, of open robbery, and open anti-social practices of a darker character; and we have so escaped, as I firmly believe, because as a nation we have amidst all our short-comings preserved the foundation of the faith. In this fact I recognise the cause of our safety, and cannot but express my confident expectation, that the purifying power of sound doctrine will ultimately heal all that is corrupt in practice.

Again I say, let us not be discouraged by the harsh report of the Commissioners, much less allow ourselves to be irritated. Perhaps we may be justified in reminding them, that although they have been bitter admonishers of our poorer brethren, although they have noted down with servile fidelity the harsher features of the national countenance, they have utterly failed to give any indication of that living soul which is still visible in the flashing eye and eloquent expression of

the whole face, and have as a body wanted either the sagacity or the boldness to discover the real causes, or to censure the real authors of the state, which they seem so deeply to deplore. Other strangers have before this come among us, and conceived very erroneous opinions respecting our real character. Augustine, the Romish monk for example, described our forefathers as utterly reprobate, because their clergy did not cut their hair after the Roman fashion, nor celebrate Easter according to a late arrangement of the Roman Calendar.

But still we were not so very deficient in essentials, as this uncharitable judge might have wished his principals to believe, and Rome did not find it difficult to find numerous Saints amidst the Christians she had so mercilessly condemned.

This very day, dedicated to the name and memory of the Demetian David, a great Saint of our name and blood, testifies that Rome better informed could not refuse to set her seal of approbation to the character of the leading members of our Church in the age immediately preceding the visit of Augustine. That bigot, had he found him alive, when he came among us, would have condemned him with as little remorse as he did his brother Bishops, in the next age. But time removes unfounded prejudices, and Rome at a later period chose to make a saint of the same man, whom her missionary Bishop would willingly have converted into a martyr, had he fallen into his persecuting hands.

We honour this day, which still bears his name, not from any superstitious feelings, not from any hope that he can shed, from his place of rest, any beneficial influence on our souls, much less from any respect for his Romish canonization, but to testify our gratitude to God, for allowing a man so honoured and reverenced by his own age and people to arise from among us, and to give utterance to a prayer that many like him may arise from our race, and like him guide them in the ways of truth. Nor, while drawing to a conclusion, can I forget to mention the name of a Vicar of Llan-

dovery, which was as familiar as a "household term" on my infant tongue. That these walls have often re-echoed the tones of that voice, which although now mute still speaketh. That one has served at this altar, has preached in these aisles, whose praise was in all the Churches of his nation, whose scriptural songs, and pious hymns are still remembered with delight, and repeated with devotion, and who in his day was undoubtedly "a burning and shining light." Would that we on this day may be instrumental in kindling a similar light, one which may not only be called, but proved to be, "Canwyll y Cymry," a brilliant lamp to our country-men.

In conclusion, my beloved countrymen, allow me to thank you for the profound earnestness, with which you have listened to my address, and to urge you to approach the throne of grace with grateful hearts and devout feelings, and to call upon God to visit with his blessings the work which we have this day commenced, to ask him to regard with his favouring eye the Founder, the Trustees, the present and all future Teachers, and above all those young Christians, whose minds will have to be formed, and intellects cultivated, and pray that they may be sent forth from the Institution into the world, full of Christian zeal and Christian principles, scholars duly armed, and trained to use the weapons of their Christian warfare, against all the wiles of Satan, the temptations of the flesh, and the more dangerous allurements of worldly ambition and cupidity.

Grant this, O Lord, for the sake of thy only Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

CARMEN ALCAICUM,

IN HONOREM

LANDUBRIENSIS ACADEMIÆ COMPOSITUM.

1

Tandem relictis montibus arduis, Valles in imas quà Tobius ruit, Quà Brânus, amnis vorticosus, Volvit aquas per amœna ruris,

Q

Campis apertis constitit arx, brevi Fundata saxo cinctaque flumine, Cujus remanserunt ruinæ, Indigenæ monumenta Martis.

3

Is, semper urgens monticolas suo Fervore gentes, non potuit pati Pacem, sed ardentes Britannos Perpetuis agitavit armis.—

4

Hinc bella cordi principibus viris, Hinc spes rapinæ ruptaque fædera, Legesque contemptæ, cliensque Pro domino patiens perire.

5

His at periclis mascula militum

Exorta proles, cordaque liberæ

Devota morti, quæ tyranni

Flectere servitio nequirent.

Nec tunc Britannis spernere mos erat Cœleste numen, temnere nec Deum; Nam plura visuntur sacella, Quæ veterum pietas dicavit.

7

Hæc ara nigro sordida pulvere,
Turrisque cœli suspiciens plagam,
Dingatis Herois perennes
Commemorat titulis honores.—

8

Colles at illi, qui supereminent Campis, volantes huc aquilas tuas, Vidêre, Claudi, quum Silurum Roma ferox populos domaret.

9

Prudens cohortes constituit jugis Romanus, arcem muniit et loco, Ut gentis invictæ catervas Frangeret, aggeribus repulsas.

10

Frustra laborans—Finibus his manus Fugêre Romæ—cernere vix potes Fossasque vallorumque molem; Fama manet—periere muri.

11

Sed gens Britannûm, nescia cedere, Immota mansit montibus in suis, Et permanebit, fata vero Si cecinit Taliessin ore.

12

Frustra hic requiras agmina Saxonum, Frustra et Canuti progeniem nigram, Evanuit Normannus hospes, Angligenæ domitor Tyranni.

Hos inter amnes, quà prior incola Patrumque sedes arvaque possidet, Ridetque, si stulti minentur Ingenitos abolere mores,

14

Hic Rex Ricardus nomine tertius Infensa factis, pectora Cambriæ Mulcere conatus, dicavit Sanguineis manibus sacellum;

16

Quod nunc, beatæ nomine Virginis Gaudens, propinquis conspicuum caput Extollit—at frustra benignus Fudit opes miseras Ricardus.—

16

Nam Rhesus ortus sanguine regio, Latèque princeps, agmina vallibus His duxit, et victor coronam Restituit generi Britanno.

17

Sed cur priores sic recolas viros Et facta densâ temporis obruta Jam nocte, cur laudes recentum Musa virûm celebrare nolis?

18

Hic nam locorum constituit novas Doctrina sedes, muneribus tuis Dotata, Phillipsi, per ævum Omne tuæ memorande genti.

19

Tu dona Cambris das popularibus, Tu copias, tu sancta volumina, Dum vivis, O verè vocandus Ingenuæ Benefactor arti.

Coptos labores promoveat Deus, Jactumque semen rore riget suo, Fruges et, Autumno metendas, Arva ferant, opulenta donis.

21

Tuis Juventus exeat ædibus, Exculta mentes, artibus et bonis Instructa, quas artes Athenæ Quas Latiæ coluêre Musæ.

22

Verbumque Christi, gentibus editum, Vivis Alumni fontibus hauriant, Et sanctioris disciplinæ Percipiant animis "Μαθησιν."

23

Reddant honores et tibi debitos, Antiqua Mater, caraque liberis, O Lingua Cambrorum, superstes Naufragiis percuntis orbis.

24

Tu sola nosti flectere pectoris Claves potentes, Mater, et, intimi Tu cordis interpres, latentes Exprimis eloquio calores.

25

Neu sit pudori volvere mentibus Quæ fecit olim verba Caractacus, Quæ rupit indignans Icenis Pectore, non domito periclis.

26

O si futuri temporis exitum
Vati daretur cernere, quot viros,
Virtute præclaros, videret,
Progeniem venientis ævi;

Quos, institutos his penetralibus, Et propter artes immeritos mori, Stellis honorem post sepulcra Addiderit Dominus salutis;

28

Vel comparandos magnanimis viris, Qui Demetarum Progenies vetus, Et nomen et summos honores Laudibus emeritis parârunt.

29

His ortus oris Asserius, novum Quum lumen Anglis gentibus intulit, Fundavit, ut fama est, "Athenas" Imperio decus Anglicano,

30

Alfrede, cœptas auspiciis tuis— Hinc et Giraldi pectora fervida, Qui regis Henrici, minantis Præsulibus patriæ ruinam,

31

Obstabat iræ; juraque civium Docti peregit viribus ingenî, Omnes ut Europæ per oras Fama viri coleretur acris.

32

Sed quis Silurem prætereat libens, Cui nostra tellus debet originum Fontes, et Arturi latentis Historias, decus et Palatî

33

Arturiani—Qui referens ducum Fidos amores duraque prœlia, Excussit Europæ veternum, Luce nova retegens Britannos.

Sed jam tenebris deprimitur diu Montana virtus et patrius vigor, Opemque Patroni requirit—. O utinam Sulienus alter

35

De gente nostra Præsulis in locum Tandem resurgat, cui benè cognita Sint lingua, mores, instituta, Perveteris generis Gomeri.

36

Sed, quod secundum, jam Deus obtulit, Devique Sedes Hesperias tenet, Qui, lege servatâ sacrorum, Edidicit populi loquelam.

37

Non ille, quamvis, ingenio potens, Consultus omnis sit sapientiæ, Neglexit incomptam Camœnam, Quæ latuit Cader-Idris orâ.

38

Facunde Præsul, tu, precor, erigas Cambros jacentes pulvere, neu sinas Torpere lethali veterno Corda, tuæ renovanda curæ.

39

Doctrina surgat fortior undique, Rectique cultus pectora roborent. Præcede—Te Camber Patronum, Doctus iter melius, sequetur.

NOTES ON THE CARMEN.

STANZA 1.

LLANDOVERY, or Llanymddyfri, "The church between the waters," is situated at a point where three vallies, with their several streams, open into a wider vale. Such situations, where the highlands suddenly break down into the lowlands, are in all countries celebrated for their natural beauties. The Towy, the "Tobius" of the Geographer Ptolemy, is one of the finest rivers not only in Wales, but in the whole Empire. It rises in the mountains of Ellenith, as Leland calls the long range of hills, which stretch down from Plynlimmon to the South, and its source is within four miles of the famous monastery of Strata Florida, on the upper waters of the Teivy. After a mountain course of more than twenty miles, amidst scenes of great sylvan beauty, it breaks into the upper end of the great Strath, known in Welsh history as the famous "Ystrad Towy," one of the richest and most picturesque districts in South Wales. The Brân, increased by the waters of the Gwytherig, a stream of a truly Alpine character, joins the Towy about a mile and a half below the Town of Llandovery, which is evidently built upon the gravel beds of these united streams.

STANZA 2.

THE ancient Castle of Llandovery was built upon a rocky eminence, which here rose suddenly from the plain, as if intended by nature to guard the important pass, which might be considered as the key to the rich domain of Ystrad Towy, known also in history by the name of "Cantref Mawr," "The Great Hundred." Its name continually recurs in the annals of Wales, although unfortunately we cannot refer to any History of Caermarthenshire, for the information of the general reader, on this and other most interesting localities intimately connected with the History of Wales.—"Carent quie vate sacro."

STANZA 3, 4, AND 5,

ALLUDE to the warlike propensities of the ancient Cymry, which form a strong contrast with their present peaceful character, although the same elements may be slumbering in undisturbed repose. Nothing however but an indomitable spirit of resistance against the aggression of Foreigners, could have preserved for them the fair heritage, which they left to their descendants. And a Cymro may pride himself upon the circumstance that the Cymry, his ancestors, censured in their triads and political maxims all aggression as totally unjustifiable. It would be therefore most unfair to blame them for resisting invaders even to the death.

STANZA 6,

ALLUDES to that feature in the character of the Cymry, which stamps them as a people essentially religious, and which could not exist without a lively and energetic faith, which they still possess, and which will, I doubt not, carry them safe through all the imminent dangers now evidently threatening all political and social communities. The fruits of this lively faith we see verified in the long list of Cambrian holy men, whom their grateful countrymen enrolled among the Saints of their Church; among them was Dingad, after whom the Church, the Parish, and a neighbouring Grove of oaks are named. He was one of the numerous family of Brychan Brycheiniog, who were canonized after death by the Cymry. He has another church dedicated to his name, now called Llandingad, or Dingatstow, in Monmouthshire.

STANZA 8,

REFERS to a Roman Station of considerable mark and magnitude, which crowned the rising hill, between the streams of the Towy and the Brân. As a military position, it possesses great advantages, and was evidently valued as such; seeing many Roman Roads part from it as a common centre; one of which, running up the left bank of the Towy, is as well marked as any of these important "Highways" in Great Britain.

STANZAS 10, 11, AND 12,

CELEBRATE the extreme tenacity with which the original race of Britons have clung to this and similar localities. Seventeen centuries have passed over us since the Alexandrian Geographer described our chief River as the "Tobius;" our county town, "Maridunum;" and the dominant tribe, as the "Demets." The Tobius is still called the Towy; Maridunum, Caer Fyrddin, Caer-Marthen; in which word "Merddin," or "Marthen," still betrays its real origin, while the inhabitants still pride themselves in being called "Gwyr Dyfed," the Men of "Demetia." But the aggressive nations have all disappeared; although they often occupied, they never were naturalized in the soil. The land absolutely either devoured, or cast them out. This truth is especially verified in Glamorganshire, where scarce a vestige remains of those aggressive Normans, who took possession of all the best parts of that county. Their names and families have alike almost entirely disappeared.

STANZAS 13, 14, AND 15,

ALLUDE to the historical fact, that the Church of Llanfair-ar-y-bryn owes its origin to the policy of Richard the third, who attempted, by building and endowing this and other churches, to persuade his subjects that no stain could be affixed to his religious profession, whatever objections might be adduced against his moral practices; this trait in the Crook-backed tyrant's character, did not escape the keen eye of Shakespeare, who has so portrayed him.

STANZA 16.

Describes the well known fact, that it was to Sir Rhys ap Thomas, and the Cymry, his kinsmen, Henry of Richmond owed his victory, at Bosworth, and the crown of England; a good memoir of these transactions, and sepecially a full description of the life and character of the famous Abbot of Talley, a prime instrument in the great revolution, is a great desideratum in Welsh History.

STANZAS 17, 18, 19, 20, AND 21.

ARE dedicated to the honour of Mr. Phillips, the munificent Founder of the Welsh Educational Institution, at Llandovery. His conduct has for years been distinguished for its liberality, in promoting the course of Classical Education in Wales; and St. David's College, at Lampeter, has partaken in no small degree of his generous patronage, and its conductors should never forget so great a benefactor, nor lament that another Institution should transmit his name more immediately to posterity. His Foundation at Llandovery can never in the slightest degree come into collision with the College at Lampeter, except from some more than common mismanagement of either Institution.

STANZAS 23, 24, AND 25,

CONTAIN a well deserved compliment to the ancient language of Britain, a language peculiarly adapted for the use of the poet and the orator. Its advantages, as a source of Etymological light, cannot be overstated; and it may be safely prophesied, that before the termination of the first session of the Llandovery Institution, many of the promising pupils, who are now pursuing their studies within its walls, will be convinced of this truth by evidence placed beyond the reach of contradiction. In truth its vocables are the vocables of Greece and Rome, and even in its grammar it reflects no small light upon the Greek and Latin grammars. If ever a language deserved the establishment of a Chair in the Universities of Great Britain, the ancient language of Britain deserves it; and it betrays any thing but a generous spirit in the dominant powers, that such a Chair is yet a "desideratum."

STANZAS 26, 27, 28,

DESCRIBE in glowing terms the poet's hope, respecting the future career of the pupils to be educated at the Institution. Such day-dreams are very allowable in works of fiction, yet certainly there is no impossibility connected with the hope that they may be realized.

STANZA 29,

ALLUDES to the well known fact of king Alfred's selection of Asser, a monk from Pembrokeshire, for one of his chief instruments in restoring learning and education among the Saxons, who had allowed the countrymen of Beda and Alcuin to lose almost every vestige of literary knowledge. Soames in his Anglo Saxon Church, (Text pages 149, 150.) says boldly that "Alfred disbursed money in promoting education at Oxford." But writes as follows in a note appended to the text. "Asser does not mention Oxford, but he mentions only one school: tertiam scholæ, quam ex multis sua propriae gentis studiosissime congregaverat. Brompton (X Script. 818.) evidently writing with Asser before him, places the school at Oxford: tertiam scholaribus Oxonia noviter congregatis. Oxford's obligations to Alfred are indeed indubitable. The only question is, wheher he did not rather restore and augment that venerable seat of learning, than found it. If a paragraph in Asser be genuine (52,) the former service was that rendered by the great king of Wessex; but this paragraph is wanting in some of the MSS.; and hence Cambridge men, desirous of denying superior antiquity to the sister university, have pronounced it an interpolation."

STANZAS 30, 31,

DESCRIBE Giraldus de Barri, born from a Cymraes of princely blood, and a Norman father, but who is known to all Europe as Giraldus Cambrensia, from his

birth place Pembrokeshire; and because he fought so manfully and ably for the rights and privileges of the Cambrian Church and Clergy. The admiration which he thus gained by his conduct, may be inferred from the terms used in an assembly of chiefs, by the Prince of Powys of his day, and which perhaps might have been instrumental in exciting the late Earl of Powys, in that long contest, which he at last terminated, by rescuing one of the ancient sees of Wales from destruction. Giraldus was without a doubt the ablest literary man of his time.

STANZAS 32, 33,

RECORD the merits of Geoffrey of Monmouth, the most influential Author of the middle ages. His literary merits are of the highest order, whether we regard his works as merely the productions of a creative genius of the first order, or we suppose that he, like Homer, only embodied in his own work, facts and fables, which had been promiscuously transmitted to him by a living and inventive tradition; he is once more recovering his proper place among men of genius, as may be seen from the altered style in which English critics of the present day speak of him and his writings. It is amusing to see the venom which old Ritson spits forth against him; unable to deny the great merit of the Ovidian verses, in which Geoffrey embodies the oracular answer, given by Diana to Brutus on consulting her, and in which is recorded "the promise of the boundless Empire of the world" to the descendants to be born to him, in his island settlement, Ritson without a stradow of reason wishes to ascribe them to Henry of Huntingdon. The extraordinary progress of Great Britain, in the path prophesied by the lines, is not the least wonderful part of the transaction.

STANZA 34,

DESCRIBES the present state of Wales, with respect to learning and literature; a state which the Commissioners appointed by Government represent as truly deplorable; the grammar schools especially are described as either totally neglected, or in most cases very indifferently conducted; some great change is therefore absolutely necessary, if any exertion is to be made for arresting an evil which is more fatal to a country than any other—the gradual disappearance of sound learning from so many of the grammar schools in the Principality—for which effect there must be some cause commensurate with the evil itself. The mischief has been exposed, and an adequate remedy if possible, ought to be discovered, and applied to such a deep seated ulcer.

STANZA 35.

The Poet ought to be forgiven if he indulges in the pardonable wish, that the honour of rescuing his countrymen from ignorance and vice, might devolve upon a countrymen of his own. Such men in ancient times were Sulgen or Sulien, perhaps a form of Julian, Archbishop of St. David's, and his son, and eventually his successor in the Archiepiscopal throne. Rhyddmarch. The death of the father is noticed in the Brut in the following terms,—"A. D. 1088, died Sulien, bishop of Dewi, the wisest and most glorious of all bishops in Cambria; best in counsel, in learning, and piety, and the defender of all peace and justice. He twice resigned his bishopric, and was twice elected to fill the vacant see. Because, adds the chronicle, no one knew like himself what were the best measures for a disturbed nation."

His son is thus described under the year A.D. 1100, "Died Rythmarch the wise, the son of bishop Sulien, in the fifty-third year of his age, the wisest of the wise men of the Britanni, the like to him arose not in the ages preceding him, nor is it easy to believe, or even to think it probable that his equal will be found in fu-

ture times, nor did he receive instruction from any one but his own father. He died after enjoying appropriate honour from his own race, and the highest renown from neighbouring nations, the Saxons, the Francs, and other transmarine nations; so that he died amidst a general lamentation of all men whose hearts were grieved by the event."

And good reason had his own race to lament his loss, for as another writer adds, "He was without a second (his father alone excepted) in learning, and wisdom, and godliness; and after Rhyddmarch instruction to scholars ceased in Menevia." The Normans soon after succeeded in intruding their own countrymen upon the reluctant clergy of the diocese.

STANZA 36,

NOTICES the praiseworthy efforts of the present occupier of the cathedral seat of Dewi, the learned, able, and eloquent Dr. Thirlwall, in making himself master of the language of the great majority of the Inhabitants of the diocese entrusted to his care. No one who knows our "Lex sacrorum" can doubt, that nothing but a lamentable necessity can justify the appointment of a person, ignorant of the language of the majority of the people committed to his episcopal superintendence, to any See connected with the Church of England. All lovers of the Church in Wales, look to the present bishop of St. David's for a remedy of the evils under which it labours. May their hopes be realized.

CONCLUDING NOTE.

It is curious to notice that many of the great Saints of Wales, flourished in the beginning, middle, and close of that very century, the ninty-sixth year of which witnessed the arrival of the monk Augustine; such were Dewi of Menevia, Teilaw of Llandaff, Deiniol of Bangor, Kentigern of St. Asaph and of Glasgow, and many others like Padarn, Avan, Beuno, &c. &c. whose names occur so profusely in the catalogues of the churches in Wales. Even Patrick, the apostle of Ireland, and Niniaw of the southern Picts, went forth to their labours, when Rome had no connexion with the Church in Britain.

CYFIEITHIAD RHYDD

O'B

GAN LADIN FLAENOROL,

ER ANRHYDEDD I

ATHROFA GYMREIG LLANYMDDYFRI.

LLE mae Towy, pan o'r diwedd Wedi gadaw'r bryniau serth, I waelodion y dyffrynnoedd Yn ymarllwys yn ei nherth; A'r lle hefyd y mae dyfroedd Y dro-byllawg afon Brân Yn ymdreiglo gyda mawredd Drwy'r gwastadedd glwyswedd glân;

Ar y doldir maith agored,
Wedi 'i seilio ar greigle serth,
A'i amgylchu gan yr afon,
Gynt y safai Castell certh;
Ond yn awr nid oes i'w weled
Ond ei olion, yn goffhad
O'r hen Yspryd poeth rhyfelgar
A deyrnasai yn y wlad.

Hwn yn wastad a anadlai Bleidiol a gelynol lid I fynwesau gwyr y bryniau, Gan eu tanio oll ynghyd; Ni oddefai i Dangnefedd Gael preswylio yn y wlad, Ond gosodai'r Brython nwydwyllt Ar bob achos ben-yng-nghâd.

Heuai ryfel yng nghalonnau Urddawl wyr o fonedd maith, Fe genhedlai chwant am yspail, Ac a rwygai bob rhyw raith; Deddfau'r deyrnas a ddirmygid; Ac er cymmaint fyddai'r bai, Gyda'i arlwydd codai'r deiliad— Yn ei gweryl marw wnai. Ond, wrth ymdrin & therfysgoedd,
Magwyd bechgyn fel y dur,
A wynebent bob peryglon,
A oddefent unrhyw gur,
A aberthent en bywydau
Dros eu rhyddid ar bob pryd,
Ond na phlygent byth mo'u gwarrau
I ormeswr yn y byd.

Etto, er eu holl gynhennau,
A rhyfela tra faent byw,
Ni ddibrisiai'r Brython grefydd,
Ni ddirnygent byth mo'u Duw;
'Waith hyd yma mae i'w gweled
Lawer o gyssegroedd mad,
A gyfodwyd gan dduwioldeb
Hen drigolion boreu'n gwlad.

Dacw Eglwys—tystia'i golwg
Dreigliad oesoedd dros ei phen,
Gwel ei chlochdy mawr ardderchog
Yn ymestyn tua'r nen;
Pwy, debygech, sydd a'i enw
Heddyw yn dynodi'r fan?—
Dingad enwog, mab i Frychan—
Mae ei enw ar y Llan.

Ond o'n cylch y mae y bryniau
Etto'n edrych dros y fro,
A ganfuant hen Eryrod
Rhufain, ar ysglyfgar dro,
I'r ardaloedd yma'n dyfod,
Dan lywyddiaeth Claudius fawr,
Pan oedd Rhufain am ddarostwng
Yr Esyllwyr oll i lawr.

a

Yn wagelawg, y Rhufeinwr Drefnai 'i luoedd ar y bryn, A chyfodai Gastell cadarn, I'w hamddiffyn y pryd hyn; Barnai hwn ei ymddiffynfa Yn ddigonol gadarnhad I'w fyddinoedd, er gorchfygu Anorchfygol wyr y wlad.

Hollol ofer—gorfu i ddewrion
Rhufain glodfawr gilio draw;
Prin y gwelit, ped hylldremit
Hwnt ac yma ar bob llaw,
Ddim o'r caerau, ddim o'r ffosydd
A osodwyd yma gynt;
'Nawr nid erys dim ond hanes—
Aeth y cyfan gyda'r gwynt.

11.

Ond am deulu hen y Brython,—
Un na chiliodd ddim erio'd,—
Rhwng y bryniau y mae etto,
Rhwng y bryniau'y mynn fod;
Rhwng y bryniau'r erys hefyd,
Er trallodau mwyaf blin,
Os gwirionedd a gyhoeddodd
Hen Daliesin gynt o'i fin.

Ofer yma chwilio olion
Seison gwangcus gynt a fu;
Ofer byth fydd edrych yma
Am hen Gnut a'i gene'l ddu;
Nid oes son am Norman yma,—
Hwn a drechai'r Seison draw;
Ond pan dd'wedodd yma, "'Mostwng,"
D'wedai'n hynaif wrtho—"'Taw."

18.

Rhwng yr hen afonydd yma, Y mae rhai mewn hwylus hynt, Yn meddiannu tai a thiroedd Eu hynafiaid dewrion gynt; Ac yn chwerthin, pan fo siarad, Gan ryw ffyliaid yn eu plith, Am ddifodi iaith a defod Na ddifodir yma byth.

14

Dyma'r lle bu'r Brenhin Rhisiart,
(Trydydd oedd o'r enw hwn.)
Er esmwytho'r pwys ar Gymru
A soedodd ef yn bwn,
Yn amcanu gwneuthur heddwch
A thrigolion gwych y wlad,
Drwy gyfodi iddynt Eglwys
A'i hen ddwylaw coch gan wa'd.

15

Hon, ar enw'r Wynfydedig Forwyn Fair, sydd hyd yn byn I'r cym'dogion oll yn amlwg— Mae yn sefyll ar y bryn;— Ond nis gallai'i rodd wenieithus Lygru calon Cymro glân;— Gwariai 'i arian mewn oferedd— Teimlai'r Cymo fel o'r bla'n.

16-

A chyfododd Rhys ab Tomos,
O waed Urien—enwog lin—
A chyd-gasglodd ei fyddinoedd,
Drwy'r dyffrynnoedd, bob yr un;
Ac 'nol ymladd brwydyr galed
Ar face Bosworth—byth bydd son—
Rhoes y Goron ar ben Harri
Edmwnd Owen Tydur,—Môn.

17.

Ond pa'm, Awen, yr adenwi
Ddewrion wyr o'r oesoedd gynt?
Mae tywyllwch dudew amser
Bron a chuddio ôl eu hynt;
Pa'm na chodi 'th lais yn hytrach
I ber-seinio caniad llon
Er anrhydedd i wladgarwyr
Enwog y genhedlaeth hon?

Dyma'r lle mae Duwies Addysg Wedi codi newydd sedd, Dan amgeledd Phillips glodfawr Huliwyd in' lenorawl wledd: Dyma Gymro a fawrygir Gan ei genedl drwy bob oes, Yn haeddiannol; ei gyffelyb Yn ein gwlad ni fu—nid oes.

Ti, O Phillips, &'th haelioni
Gyfoethogi Gymru hen,
Iddi ti bentyrraist roddion,
Rhoddion goreu—llyfrau llên;
Tra fo't byw, ac wedi'th farw,
Enwir di, a hynny'n iawn,
Yn Brif Noddwr pob gwybodaeth,
Yn Gefnogwr pob rhyw ddawn.

Llwydded Duw y gwaith ddechreuwyd, Gwaith o bwys—anturiaeth fawr; Ar yr had a hauer yma Gwlith ei fendith ddelo i lawr; Boed i'r maesydd hoff, cynnyrchiol, A wrteithir yma'n rhad, Ddwyn cynhauaf mawr, toreithiog, Erbyn Hydref dros y wlad. 21

O'r adeilad a gyssegrwyd I Ddysgeidiaeth yma, doed Bechgyn clodfawr am wybodaeth, Llawn o ddysg ym more'u hoed,— Bechgyn llym, a fedront drafod Iaith y Llan, a iaith y Llys, A gwybodau, ac â ieithoedd Groeg a Rhufain wrth bob bys.

22.
Ond, uwch pobpeth, geiriau bywiol
Iesu Grist, Iachawdwr dyn,
A gyhoeddwyd i'r cenhedloedd,
A dderbynier gan bob un;
Athrawiaethau a rheolau
Sanctaidd Air ein Harglwydd glân,
I'r myfyrwyr ieuaingc yma

Fyddo'n golofn niwl a thân.

Talent hefyd barch dyladwy
Byth i tithau, 'n henwog iaith,
Iaith a hoffir gan ei mheibion,
Iaith or-oesodd oesau maith;
Iaith a safodd er tymhestloedd
Garwaf yn y byd a fu,
Pan ar greigiau chwyldroadau
Y llong-ddrylliodd ieithoedd lu.

Ti yw'r bennaf iaith a fedri Agor cloiau mynwes dyn, Ti yn unig a gyrhaeddi Giliau'r galon bob yr un; Ti yw'r un a fedri arllwys Holl gynnwysiad meddwl llawn, Ti all roi, uwch torf o ddynion, Areithyddol ddenol ddawn.

Na foed c'wilydd ar ein bechgyn Byth i seinio'r heniaith fad, Gynt a seiniwyd gan Garadog, Wrth gynhyrfu 'i wyr i gâd; Iaith a daniodd dorf o ddynion I ymddial ar eu cas, Wrth ei seinio gynt gan Fuddug, Un o'n cenedl—un o'n tras.

O! na ledid dorau mawrion
Dyfodoldeb ger fy mron,—
Na ddisgynnai dawn brophwydol
Arnaf ar y funud hon!
O! 'r fath dyrfa hardd a welwn
Yn cyfodi ar bob llaw,
O wroniaid dysg a rhinwedd
I addurno'r oes a ddaw;—

Wedi 'u dysgu'n Llanymddyfri, Wedi haeddu bythol glod, Wedi gadsel son moliannus Am eu dysg i'r oesau i dd'od; Wedi gwneuthur lles i Gymru, Wedi ymdrech ymdrech gref, Ac o'r diwedd wedi'u derbyn Gan eu Harglwydd fry i'r nef.

28.

F'allai hefyd, yn y nifer,
Yr addysgir yma lu
O ardderchog gadfridogion,
Fel y rhai yn Nyfed fu;
Rhywrai ail i Domos Picton,
Teilwng byth o gael coffhad,
A ddangosant enw Cymro
Ar flaen cleddyf i bob gwlad.

Yma etto f'allai codir—
O'r un ardal, o'r un tras—
Asser Menevensis arall—
Geraint enwog, y Bardd Glås;
Hwn a seilodd, fel mae'r hanes,
Yn Rhydychen drigfa dysg,—
A dosturiodd wrth y Seison,
A roes lewyrch yn eu mysg.

Alffred iddo fu'n gynnorthwy— Dim ond enwi 'i enw mawr— F'allai hefyd codir Gerald Yma—brudio'r wyf yn awr— Hwn yn wrol a wrthsafai Falais Harri fawr ei frad, Pan amcanai ddamsang breinniau Eglwysyddion hoff ei wlad.

Dros Esgobaeth hen Ty-Ddewi Fe ddadleuai'n bybyr iawn, Ac yn erbyn pob gormeswyr Gwrth-osodai'i rymmus ddawn; Son y sydd yn aros etto Trwy holl gyrrau Ewrob faith Am y gwr a siglodd Rufain A grymmusder pennaf iaith.

Ac ni ddylid byth anghofio
Tad Hanesiaeth foreu'n gwlad,
Y Parchedig Gruffydd Arthur—
Sieffre Mynwy—Awdwr mad;
Ef a roddodd ddifyr hanes
Am Farchogion y Ford Gron—
Hanes etto sydd yn felus
Gan ddarllenwyr yr oes hon.

83.

Cof o'u ffyddlon garwriaethau,
A'u hymladdau celyd iawn,
Wrth ei roi mewn cyfansoddiad
Cywrain er darlleniad llawn,
A gyffrôdd gysgadrwydd Ewrob,
Ac a ledodd dros y byd
Ardderchogrwydd y Prydeiniaid—
Cenedl enwog—oreu i gyd.

Ond yn awr mae niwl a chaddug,
Y mae crammen—y mae rhwdWedi cuddio'r hen wrolder,
Wedi llethu'r yspryd brwd;—
Y mae eisiau rhyw Gefnogwr,
Y mae eisiau gwr o ddawn,—
Gwae fi etto na chyfodai
Sulien arall—oll yn llawn

O ddysgeidiaeth, i'w gyssegru Etto'n Esgob yn ein plith: Hwn a fyddai yn ddigwyddiad Nad anghofid yma byth;— Un fel hyn a fedrai siarad Iaith y Cymro'n ddi-naccâd; A'n harferion a'n defodau A adwaenai drwy y wlad.

Ond mae'r Arglwydd wedi gwenu Eisioes ar un cwrr o'n tir, Gorllewinol Gadair Dewi A feddianna Cyfaill gwir; Hwn, gan synied ei ddyledswydd, A golygu ein lleshad, A ymdrechodd ac a lwyddodd, Nes y dysgodd iaith y wlad.

Hwn, er maint ei ddawn mawreddog,
A'i gydnabod â phob dysg,
Ni ddirmygodd ein llenyddiaeth,
Tra'n preswylio yn ein mysg;
Hoffodd Awen wledig Cymru,
Sydd yn llechu ddydd a nos
Rhwng clogwyni Cader-Idris—
Un o'i bath ni fu—nid o's.

Athraw doniawg, rho dy gymhorth
I ddyrchafu'r Cymro gwan,
Sydd yn gorwedd ar y ddaear—
Nerth dy fraich a'i codo i'r lan;
Na oddefa i farweidd-dra
Amgylchynu ciliau 'i fron,—
Drwy dy gymhorth a'th amgeledd
Gwelir Cymru etto'n llon.

Dan dy nawdd, cynnydded Addysg Draw ac yma dros y wlad; Rhoed Gwybodau i fynwesau Ein cydwladwyr gadarnhad. Arwain di, ardderchog Eagob; Dan dy wres—yng ngoleu'th dân, Ar y ffordd, yng ngrym dysgeidiaeth, Teithia'r Cymro yn y bla'n. WILLIAM SAUNDERS. WILLIAM REES, PRINTER, LLANDOVERY.



Aged Poor Society

OF LONDON.

AT ST. PATRICK'S CHAPEL,

SUTTON STREET, SOHO,

On the Third Sunday of Advent,

THE 12TH OF DECEMBER, MDCCCXLVII,

BY THE RIGHT REV. NICHOLAS WISEMAN, Wishop of Melipotamus, & Pro V.A.T.

LONDON:
CHARLES DOLMAN, 61, NEW BOND STREET.

MDCCCXLVIII.

Price One Shilling.



The proceeds of the Sale of this Sermon, will, by the kind permission of the RIGHT REV. DR. WISEMAN, be devoted to the objects of the society. The AGED POOR SOCIETY was established the latter part of the seventeenth century, and relieves from seventy to eighty poor persons, all above the age of sixty, granting them pensions of three and four shillings weekly. Contributions towards its funds will be thankfully received, and gratefully acknowledged by the secretary, MR. PAGLIANO, No. 28, Golden Square.

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THE POOR CLIENTS

WHOSE CAUSE IS HERE PLEADED,

BUT WHOSE OWN PLEA IS ALL POWERFUL, WHEN ADDRESSED

(NOT AS HIS WAS TO MEN, BUT)

TO GOD,

THE AUTHOR DEDICATES THIS SERMON

AS A TITLE TO THEIR PRAYERS.

NON IN INCERTO DIVITIARUM, SED IN PRECE PAUPERIS

SPEM REPONENS.—S. AMBROSIUS.

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SERMON.

"Rise up before the hoary head, and honour the person of the aged man, and fear the Lord, thy God."—
Numbers xix. 32.

Charity, my dearly beloved brethren, or, in other words, that love by which our blessed Redeemer promised that all men should know his disciples, is not merely a bond which unites one man to his immediate neighbour, but rather resembles vast net-work, which overspreads the entire Church, uniting together even the most distant points, and causing every individual who is within its embraces to be filled, and to vibrate with brotherly affection. But while this Church of God inculcates upon us this duty of universal love, it is one of her most pleasing offices to direct our attention to its more specific objects, and to present to us more particular motives on which it should be exercised. And it is our duty, as her ministers, repeatedly to summon you to the practice of this highest

virtue, in its various forms, and to place before you the many grounds on which it claims your homage. Thus shall it be as that royal robe described by the Psalmist, at once the symbol of the spotless inward beauty of the King's daughter, and yet varied in the riches and colours that adorn it.—(Ps. xliv.) A virtue which is daily urged upon us, may no doubt, appear to be burdensome, and even become irksome, but it will be thus rendered comparatively light and pleasing, from the varied aspects under which we are called upon to exercise it.

One day, the object of our solicitude will appear in the shape of a poor child placed in the midst of you, even as by Jesus himself was one such placed before his disciples: We bid you look upon his innocent countenance and his artless mien, and to see in him not only one of the little ones of Christ, but rather the symbol of Him who is the beloved of our souls, when standing in childhood by the side of His Virgin Mother. The Church thus exhorts you to consider the child, not only as the favourite charge of God's angels, but as holding the place of Him who descended upon earth, in the endearing form of a helpless infant. She calls upon you, under this aspect, to love and cherish it; to attend to its corporal and spiritual welfare; and to make the child grow up in closest conformity and resemblance to Him as a Man, whose symbol it now is.

She brings, at another time, the poor and squalid, or the infirm and crippled, and laying them before

you, even as the relations of the palsied man laid him at His feet who alone could cure him, she bids you look on these as the objects especially chosen by your Saviour, who is the model of your charity, as objects for the exercise of His. She, therefore, invites you to consider them as the special objects of His regard, for whom He offers Himself to you as security for repayment, with high interest, of your kindness to them. But more, she desires you to contemplate in their persons, however wretched, the chosen image of Him, who submitted not only to be poor and despised, but to become a worm and no man, to be bruised for our sins, and wounded for our iniquities.

Again, she offers you the opportunity of reclaiming those who have early wandered from the path of virtue; she shows you Magdalen kneeling at the feet of Jesus, in spite of the proud Pharisees who surround Him, and she bids you imitate that charity which He thus manifested towards the most despised and most uncherished class of His poor children.

But there is another class, dearly beloved brethren, whose claims I come here more particularly to advocate this day, in the name and on behalf of the God of charity and of mercy. It is the cause of those who have long since passed through the meridian of their lives, who perhaps in better days may have dispensed their charity to such as then needed it, or who more probably were always poor as they are now. I appeal to you on behalf of men who have now nearly arrived at the close of their long

and weary journey through this world of sorrow, who have got through its temptations and miseries, and are now standing on the very verge of that eternity, which will shortly receive you as well as them. On the one hand, they are suppliants to you for mercy and charity, but on the other, as they stretch forth their hands in earnest prayer to God, they are most powerful intercessors on your behalf, who assist in supporting their last steps, and in lightening the burthen of their helpless old age.

Yes, dearly beloved brethren, I come to place before you the claims for peculiar charity which the aged poor—the old ones of our flock—have upon you, and to entreat you to contribute according to the means which God has bestowed upon you, towards the comforts of their declining days, and more particularly towards their relief during this season of hardship, cold, and inclemency,—a season that, perhaps, to many of them, will prove the last on earth, and may send them to be petitioners for you at the very throne of Grace. I will therefore endeavour to place before you, in a few words, the more peculiar rights, which the word of God and the teaching of the Church show them to possess, as a title to your kind and generous relief.

The feeling then which the holy Church of God more particularly claims from us in regard to these my poor clients, is that so aptly described in the words of my text, "Rise up before the hoary head, and honour the person of the aged man, and fear the

Lord thy God." As if the Lord should say to each of you: "If thou respectest My law,—if thou wishest to show towards Me reverential fear, manifest that feeling, by displaying it in favour of those who walk before you in your path, and who, in some degree, have claims upon you akin to those due to the title and dignity of a father."

"The boast of youth," says the wise man, "is in its strength, but old age is a crown of dignity."-(Prov. xvi. 32.) This is a crown placed by the hand of God Himself upon the brow of age: by the hand of Him, without whose wise designs not even a bird of the air can fall to the ground. Whatever may be the vain imaginings of man, though the work of death may appear to him purely capricious, and to be guided by mere fortune, we know that the strokes of its scythe are directed by the hand of God, and that he who falls, falls because God has smitten him, and he who stands remains, because God in His wisdom has yet preserved him. "For whether we live, we live unto the Lord, and whether we die, we die unto the Lord. Therefore whether we live, or whether we die, we are the Lord's."—(Rom. xiv. 8.) When, therefore, we behold one man whose days are prolonged through successive generations, who has seen many fall before him, that seemed more vigorous than himself, but who yet stands majestic as the solitary pillar amidst the crumbled ruins of some ancient city, we cannot but look upon him with reverence, as preserved to be a monument of God's especial mercy and kindness in

his regard. It has required the watchful care of His Providence to sustain him through the dangers of many years, to ward off accidents, and mitigate disease; and finally, to crown his head with those hoary locks, which even, among heathen nations, were deemed entitled to veneration. Well, therefore, may this be expected from us who see in them the token of Divine favour; and well may the young be commanded to pay them homage, deference, and love, on whom this has been bestowed. By thus acting they may claim, with confidence, a portion of that blessing that has been pronounced on dutiful children,—they may hope to reach that length of days which they honour in others, and ultimately to obtain the higher reward promised to those who obey the Divine command. So strong then is the claim to reverence from those whom God has conducted through the perils of this life to a venerable old age; for He has been pleased to communicate to them a portion of His own rights.

The term "elders," in the old law, belonged to the judges set over the people; and in the new law, the priesthood of God have been dignified with this title. The very word "priest," signifies "elder," in its original tongue, as if to show that they who are called to be the real judges of the people, might, indeed, like the disciple of St. Paul, be young in years, and but little experienced in the ways of life, yet still were to be invested, in the eyes of their subjects, with that honour which so naturally belongs to the grey head. It

seemed sufficient to give them but the mere title of old age, to secure to them that respect and deference which are due to its implied wisdom and experience.

But, in truth, the aged may in some degree be considered, under the law of Christ, to take place among those consecrated and anointed elders of God's people. To them is committed the important office of instructing, by word and example, those who are younger than themselves. To them belongs, in a special manner, the duty of preserving, with the utmost jealousy, the form of sound words,—that sacred deposit of faith and worship which the Church has ever gloriously preserved. "Let not," says the wise man, "let not the discourse of the ancients escape thee, for they have learned of the fathers, for of them thou shalt learn understanding."—(Ecclus. viii. 11, 12.) But in our days, and in our circumstances, indeed, we may well look with reverence, and almost with awe, on those who have escaped from the destructive hand of time, to reach this extraordinary age. We may well revere those who worshipped, not merely with our fathers but with our grandsires, at a time when in truth they were but a little flock and much despised, a time when they sought the holes and caverns of the earth wherein to adore the God of their fathers,-when they had to hide the fire of the sanctuary beneath the ashes, or, as was done by the priests of Israel when driven into captivity, almost bury it in the depths of earth, lest it should be trodden out. Well may we honour those who, in their youth, have borne a far

greater share of obloquy, and scorn, and persecution, than has fallen to our lot,—who have survived till now, bearing gloriously the name of Catholic on their brow when it was the object of the world's hatred and slander.—who were not to be lured to forswear their faith, when every temptation that human ingenuity could devise was held out to the disciples of the Church to abandon her-well, I say, may we honour, esteem, and reverence those who have been spared by God's mercy, like the holy Simeon, only one in tens of thousands, to see the salvation of Israel, to contrast the days of glory to our holy Church, with those of humiliation and sorrow, through which they have so miraculously passed. For the sake then of what your fathers suffered that they might hand down to you unblemished and unsullied the faith wherein you glory, honour and cherish those who were their companions in arms, their fellow-soldiers, and their fellow-conquerors-those who adored with them at their humble altars, and have survived to record, for your gratitude, and for your edification, the sufferings and the triumphs See how every country, and of a past generation. none more than your own, prizes the veterans of past campaigns, the gallant men who have fought and bled beneath its standard, by sea or land. See, how not an alms-house but a regal residence, the first perhaps in the land in grandeur and magnificence, is not thought too good to harbour them in their old age; how there every comfort is provided for their declining years; not merely shelter, and food, and raiment, but

honour and respect, which change the token of humble dependence into a proud badge of merit, and turn the alms of a nation into the payment of a debt, and the satisfaction of a well-earned claim. And so do you honour your grey and venerable warriors, that by mingling respect with your charity, and soothing with kindly expressions the poor dole which you award them, they may feel proud of the character in which they stand before you, and not blush to receive your alms. Let them not sink unhonoured into an unmourned grave; but rather, as the gloom of their latter days grows deeper, let the charity of the young generation expand; and show in its development its increasing sense of the blessings which God in His mercy seems to have reserved for it, while His trials and severities appeared to have been spent on them.

But it is not only here below that God has condescended to show us, what reverence should be felt and paid, towards the aged amongst His people. He has been pleased, in revealing to us the mysteries of His eternal kingdom, in throwing open to our contemplation the secrets of His heavenly court, to represent to us His chosen saints, those who of all others have been selected to sit upon thrones around His highest glory—those who of all others are most powerful when, approaching Him in supplication, they cast down their crowns before Him, and pour from their golden vials the prayers of their brethren on earth;—He has been pleased to represent to us these His most favoured saints in that very form of venerable old age, which I

call upon you to respect in my poor clients. Yes, they are, in a manner, the models and types of those twenty-four Elders, who occupy the foremost place in the Church triumphant, and approach the nearest to the presence of God Himself. And this, again, would seem written to show us, that the aged for whom I plead, should hold the highest rank in the Church militant here below, and are, therefore, worthy of our best honour and regard. For shall not those be honoured whom the King Himself hath chosen to honour? If age be so distinguished in heaven, shall it not be reverenced by us upon earth?

But the Almighty Himself,—even He who is a pure and incomprehensible Spirit,-He who fills with His majesty both heaven and earth, has condescended to represent Himself to the eyes of prophet and apostle in the figure of man; not under the form of a giant in his strength, not under the form of a youth in his beauty, but in the semblance of the aged man. has manifested Himself as the Ancient of days, knowing that under such a form He was most likely to secure the highest honour, the most sincere reverence, and the deepest veneration from men here below. If we honour humanity in all the forms in which the Son of God was pleased to exhibit Himself, surely we shall honour it even more especially in that form, wherein the Almighty Creator Himself, His Eternal Father, was pleased to receive the homage and worship of man.

Such are, then, the claims of those whose cause

I have this day to advocate, on your special regard, on your honour, and your reverence. But is this all? Is it only to ask you to honour them by inward feelings, or in uttered words, that I have called you together in this holy place? No, dear brethren, there is a more urgent duty to be discharged in their regard. You are called upon to show your respect, in the mode in which it hath pleased Almighty God more especially to demand it. Your honour and regard for your aged brethren, must go further than those of the Pharisees, whom our blessed Saviour so strongly reproved. For they neglected to provide for their parents in their old age, contenting themselves with mere words of reverence in their regard. What would this be but a hollow and a worthless tribute; while the word of God expressly tells us, that the honour to parents must be shown by acts of love, and, if needs be, of charity. "Support the old age of thy father," says the wise man, "for the relieving of the father shall not be forgotten."-(Ecclus. iii. 14, 15.) If, then, the honour due to parents must be manifested in this practical way, surely my poor petitioners, whose age entitles them to share in the feelings which the son entertains for his parents, have a claim no less to the same mode of exhibiting them. Support their old age; and be assured that, by God at least, this your charity will not be forgotten. For alas! my brethren, they come not to receive from you mere empty expressions of regard, but to claim your sympathies in the substantial form of charity. They stand before you as suppliants in the deepest distress, asking you to relieve them in their complicated afflictions. Oh! you must not think of those, in whose behalf I address you, as men that exhibit the venerable form of some olden patriarch, who, having passed erect through life, looks cheerfully around upon a numerous progeny, upon abundant flocks, upon a princely home; and sinks down into an honoured grave, beloved by his household, respected by his neighbours. You must not associate the idea of these elders, who, through me, entreat your kind commiseration, with the majestic mien, the white flowing beard, the silver locks, and the ruddy smiling countenance of a healthy, ripe old Oh! no; it is distressing to say it; but in your petitioners you must contemplate, combined with the helplessness of old age, every other species of wretchedness and sorrow.

They are old, indeed, and their age makes them venerable; but they are poor, very poor, and tattered in their garments. They are wrinkled in face and withered in frame: their eyes are sunken, their hands are palsied, their back is bent: they are crippled in their limbs, perhaps disfigured by sores, and their bones are aching with infirmity and cold. It is in this form that venerable old age stretches forth its trembling, suppliant hands, and asks you, in the name of our common God of Charity, for your succour and your protection. Do not say that I have destroyed the bright illusion that you had formed

for yourself respecting my clients; that you can no longer feel for them that respect and interest which the simple thought and image of old age had before excited in you. Oh! say not so, my dearly beloved brethren, or you know not how to honour these aged poor as God himself delights to honour them. It is God who, by His infinite mercy, has brought them to the present moment. His Hand, you know, has led them through the perils of life, and, by special kindness, has brought them to the most honoured stage of their mortal pilgrimage. Well, it is the same merciful Hand that has dimmed their eyes and hardened their hearing; that has touched their limbs and withered them; that has dried up the marrow of their bones, and filled them with infirmity. And wherefore? In order to make them, tenfold, worthier objects of your charity, therefore hath God visited them with these afflictions. is for their own sakes as well as for yours that these poor sufferers are thus placed before you; that your compassion may be in a greater degree moved, by the spectacle of great age and extreme poverty, united in one fellowbeing, and in one brother; that so their relief may be doubled, and you may become entitled to a twofold reward.

In respect to other and inferior things our affections run differently. Mark the venerable oak, that has already stood for centuries. Men will admire its beauty, but leave it to its own vital energies, so long as there is greenness in its branches, and vitality in its core. While its boughs are covered with leaves, we have comparatively little care for it; but when at length its branches have one by one withered away; when its huge leafless arms sigh to the wintry blast; when its trunk has been scooped out and only its hollowed shell remains, and when it seems likely but to survive a few years more, then it is we begin to consider it a venerable and almost a sacred tree, and acknowledge the claims which its age and ruined grandeur have upon our kindly guardianship. It is then propped up, and fenced round with the greatest care; so that, if possible, the old decayed trunk, which feels and knows not, may be preserved for a few more years, as, perhaps, the only survivor of the long since destroyed forest. So, then, let us feel for the poor, the helpless, the infirm, who are tottering towards the grave, for these your aged suppliants. The nearer they are verging towards eternity, the stronger are their claims upon your charitable support; the more powerful is the force of their appeal; the more liberal and generous must be the contributions of your charity.

Yes! dearly beloved brethren, in a few more days you will all, no doubt, be in the midst of your happy and cheerful families; your children will be gathered around you, to the second, or perhaps the third, generation, near the cheerful fireside and the abundant table, enjoying the festivities of the day; not unmindful that it was at this inclement season of the year that your Saviour appeared upon the earth, as a poor helpless little one, to be thus ushered into this world of misery and sorrow. Oh! while thus situated amid the comforts of a happy home, think of those who are standing outside, shivering with the cold of winter, who would be glad to feel but one ray of the genial

warmth you are so liberally enjoying, or to receive a few crumbs of that bread which will fall to the ground from your well stored table. Think, my dear brethren, how happy you would be if you could relieve their pinching misery, and make them sharers in that comfort and happiness with which you are surrounded. It is to procure these very blessings for the elders of your congregation, for the old ones of the flock, that I this day address you. It is that we may contribute in this coming season, towards supplying them with the comforts of warmth, raiment, and food. It is not to place them in luxurious houses, to gather them together at the wide spread feast, and to clothe them in elegant apparel, that this appeal is made to you. Oh no! it is merely to shelter their old decaying limbs from the inclemency of the sharp winter that is approaching; it is to enable them to thank God for your bountiful and timely charity; it is to prolong their days for a short space, and so enable them to offer up their sincere and powerful prayers to the throne of heaven in your behalf.

Oh! then, as you hope to be blessed upon that most blessed day, now so close at hand; as you wish to be well thought upon by God, in memory of whose sufferings you will make others partakers in your joy; as, I say, you will be glad, on that day, to think of having given happiness to others whose lives are habitually wretched, I entreat you to contribute with that charity, that kindness and love, which have ever been the characteristic of the Catholic Church, liberally towards the relief of our aged

poor. And oh! may the Almighty pour out upon you the abundance of His blessings; and may you, while feeling but little of the same cares as oppress these aged suppliants, have a share in their claims upon the mercies of that God who loves them; may your charity of this day recollected, and often repeated, brighten your own declining years, and enable you to look forward with hope and joy, upon the prospect of being permitted to share with them, in the fullness of your days, the crown of everlasting glory.



THE END.

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"BE NOT MANY MASTERS."

A SERMON



PREACHED IN

THE CHURCH OF SAINT AUGUSTINE,

MHT TA

VISITATION OF THE VENERABLE THE ARCHDRACON OF BRISTOL,

JULY 6, 1848.

BT

JAMES RUSSELL WOODFORD, M. A.

PEMB. COLL. CAMBRIDGE;

INCUMBENT OF ST. MARK, LOWER EASTON.

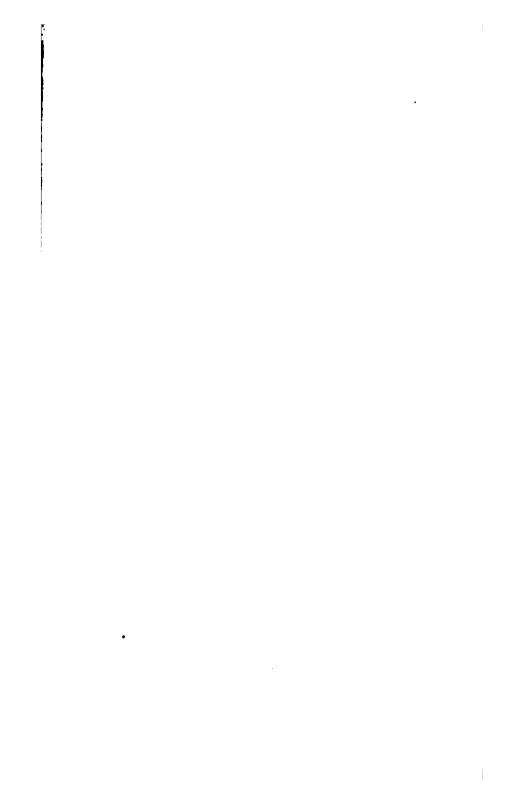
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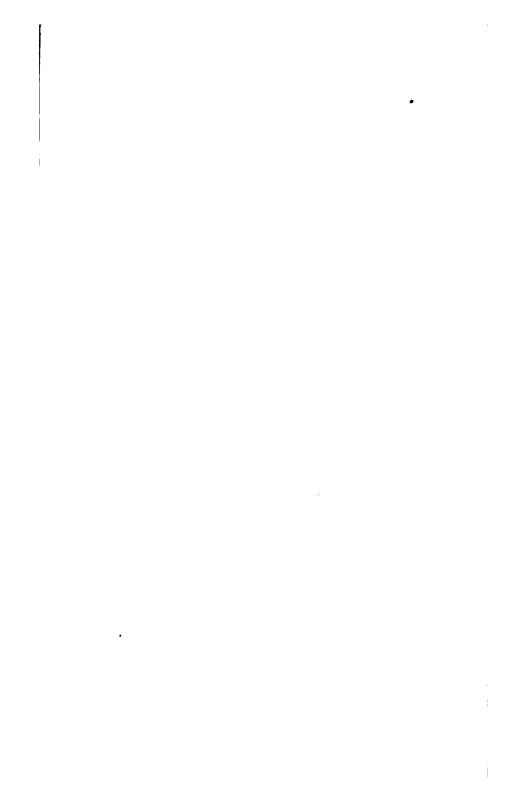
The Venerable the Archdeacon of Bristol,

and

The Clergy of the Beaury,

Chis Sermon

Is respectfully inscribed.



SERMON.

Ep. St. James iii. 1.

MY BRETHREN, BE NOT MANY MASIERS.

It is a marked characteristic of our most holy faith, that on the one hand it seeks to give to every high and awful mystery, a practical bearing; and on the other hand, to elevate each common duty, by connecting it with a sublime revelation. The former habit at once frees the apostles from the imputation of fanaticism; the latter removes them from that class of teachers who would make utility the sole basis of morals. The enthusiast finds his natural province, in dilating in general and obscure terms, upon well nigh unfathomable points. He has no sympathy with ordinary life: instead of leading men to be sanctified in their respective callings, he summons them from plain duties to an excited and dreamy state of mind. On the contrary, the utilitarian accounts those as visionaries, who would regard every day occurrences as flowings into the world of sight, of deep and fearful verities; and associate practical maxims with the very nature of God. We have said that the inspired writers are

to be reckoned neither with the one or the other class. They are essentially practical. The incarnation, the crucifixion, the resurrection, the ascension, are in their hands made to suggest personal lessons of regeneration, self-denial, renewal, heavenly-mindedness; whilst they give a dignity to even the common precept of meekness, by connecting it with the ineffable humiliation of the everlasting Son. We have a remarkable instance of what we advance. in the light in which the unity of the Christian Church is spoken of. "Behold, how good and pleasant a thing it is, brethren, to dwell together in unity." To many these words contain all that is to be said upon the oneness of the kingdom of Christ. That those who believe in one God and Father, who in their fallen humanity, their weaknesses and sorrows, their sisterhood with corruption and the worm, have an undeniable fellowship, should all speak the same thing, is a truth which so commends itself to our reason that its desirableness can hardly be questioned. And if our blessed Lord and His disciples had merely urged us to be of one mind, by arguments derived from such sources, we could scarcely have denied their cogency, or justified our many divisions; but, indeed, He has done much more than this. He has thrown over the doctrine of the unity of the church a very awful character, for He has represented it as a communication to us men, of one of His own attributes, as an investing us, His creatures, with a portion of His

own majesty, a clothing us with the skirts of His own raiment. What other meaning can we attach to the well-known words, "Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given Me, that they may be one, as we are?1" and again, "The glory which Thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one.2 "Christ," says St. Cyril, "assumes the unity of substance, which the Father hath with Him and He with the Father, as an image of the unity of undivided love and agreement, which is perceptible in the union of soul, and would mingle us together, as it were, with each other, by the virtue of the holy and consubstantial Trinity." "The early Christians," observes a writer of our own communion, "argued from the unity of the Godhead to the subjective unity of the church, and by the converse: the one form exhibiting the principle, the other the symbol; the unity of the Godhead being both the archetype and the cause; the unity of the church the consequent and the expression." And again, he says, "It is not difficult to see the ideal relation between the unity of the Divine nature, and the unity of the church; the visible phenomenon is in a manifold way declaratory of the invisible mystery."3 And thus, in accordance with

¹ St. John xvii. 11. ² St. John xvii. 22.

³ For the quotation from St. Cyril, and the following remarks, see Archdeacon Manning's "Unity of the Church," pp. 227, 228.

our introductory remarks, we repeat that the organic unity of the church, is more than the result of an agreement of a multitude of men in faith and practice; it consists mainly in this, but it is not to be regarded as produced by this. Its source is It is a gift immediately of Christ our Head, an effluence of His own ineffable unity with the Father. This unity, whatever it be, in all its glory, He has bestowed upon the church; harmony of will, of discipline, of belief, is but the form which it takes when communicated to created beings. "He is one," says St. Augustine; "The church is unity; nothing answers to one except unity."4 And St. Cyprian writes, "The Lord says, 'I and my Father are one,' and again, it is written of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, 'and these three are one.' Does any one believe that this unity, flowing as it does from the Divine steadfastness, can be cut asunder in the church?"5

⁴ Vid. St. Aug. in Psal. ci. Conc. Sec. "Hæc fides est Christianorum. In hac ergo fide in quâ congregata est Ecclesia multi illi filii desertæ magis quam ejus quæ habet virum: respondit ei, Dixit ei laudem secundum ejus precepta in via fortitudinis ejus, non in via infirmitatis ejus. Quomodo ei responderit jam supra audistis: in conveniendo populos in unum, et regna ut serviant Domino. In hoc ei ergo respondit in unitate: qui autem non est in unitate non ei respondit. Ille enim unus est, ecclesia unitas. Non respondit uni nisi unitas."

^{5 &}quot;Vid. St. Cyp. De unitate. Dicit Dominus: Ego et Pater unum sumus, et iterum de Patre, et Filio, et Spiritu Sancto, scriptum

We have been led into these remarks, because much of what we design to say in commenting on the words of the text, will vary as to its force, just in proportion to the degree of importance which we attach to the oneness of the Christian church. St. James, writing to believers scattered abroad, urges upon them not to be many masters. The words are by some considered to be exegetical of the injunction delivered at the 19th verse of the first chapter, in which he exhorts every man to be swift to hear, and slow to speak. From this reproof of an overreadiness to speak, he is led on to discourage an over-zealousness of teaching. We need not enter into the arguments on which he bases his exhortation. We seem to have a clear admonition that we should not be anxious to be all masters in Israel. And as applied to us of the clergy, we think that a very important topic is here introduced. unquestionably our high calling to reprove, to exhort, to admonish, to divide the word of truth, to preach the word, to be instant in season and out of season; but not therefore, is the warning of St. James without a bearing upon us. We do not

est: Et hi tres unum sunt, et quisquam credit hanc unitatem de divina firmitate venientem scindi in Ecclesia posse."

Compare likewise the following passage from the same Treatise: "Unitatem illa portabat de superiore parte venientem, id est, de cælo et a Patre venientem, quæ ab accipiente ac possidente scindi omnino non poterat, sed totam semel et solidam firmitatem inseparabiliter obtinebat."

know a more besetting temptation to the ministers of Christ, than that of gradually elevating themselves into centres of unity in their respective localities, so as to fill a national church with many There is a natural desire of bringing masters. others into sameness of thought with ourselves, especially among men persuaded of the importance of their own views, and it extends not only to essentials, but to non-essentials. Now this anxiety, in its measure a lawful tendency of the human mind, yet contains the seed of much error; for a few steps beyond the just limits in which it should be confined, will carry us on to the point of valuing agreement with ourselves, above the general concord of the entire body. It is a flattering thing to be possessed of much personal influence, yea, and an alluring thing to be the polar star of immortal souls in their travel after God; and the peril is lest we sink into the mistake of allowing the mental vision of our congregations to be filled with ourselves. Our subject of discourse then, is the extent to which the individual influence of a clergyman is to be encouraged. If extended beyond a definite boundary, it will become dangerous to unity; if excluded altogether, we lose one great means which God has vouchsafed of winning sinners to Himself, viz. the instrumentality of the affections, the preaching of a zealous life. Recognising then to the full, the lawfulness of leading a parish to look up with deference to the pastor appointed over it, we desire to find certain checks which may

prevent this deference from deteriorating into evil, becoming perilous to the oneness of the whole church, and rendering us subjects for the apostolic rebuke, "My brethren, be not many masters."

I. We would suggest, first, that it will be our wisdom so to encourage the deference of our people, as that we may not shut out Christ Jesus from their gaze.

Now, in thus saying, we do not mean that in our teaching, we should be most unwearied in setting Him forth as the alone rest and confidence of the soul, our hope and our fortress, our castle and our It is not the gospel which we deliver, deliverer. if we deliver not this; nor is there much risk at the present day of our degenerating into the cold and barren moralists of a recent age, the Christianity of whose sermons could scarce be discerned except from the text. We trust that there is no pastor in our own church who does not seek, in all his functions, to make the cross of Christ the foundation of justification and sanctification, the anchor of the soul, which will alone hold sure and stedfast when "the floods of death compass us about, and all His billows and waves pass over us." design rather to insist on the necessity of teaching people to feel, with regard to our ministrations, that they are in truth not ours but God's, not the ministrations of man, but of Him who became Man. in order to be the everlasting teacher of His baptised.

When our Lord was manifested in the flesh, it

was not only that He might be a sacrifice for sin, but also the Instructor of the race which He redeemed. Accordingly it is said by Isaiah, in a prediction always referred to the Messiah, "The Lord hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary."6 Hence He is called our Prophet, as well as our Priest and King: and it is observable that the execution of His functions as the anointed Teacher of the nations, functions, it may be, implied in that lofty strain, wherein amidst other august titles He is denominated, "The Counsellor," went hand in hand with His ministry, as the healer of the sick and the bearer of our infirmities. After His resurrection He appears to have ceased from personally discharging this office to the population at large. During the great forty days, He was engaged, it would seem, rather in communicating with the apostles who were to succeed Him as teachers of the universe, than in instructing it Himself. The common people no longer heard Him. The multitudes no longer thronged about Him. Henceforth He would teach mediately through others. His first agents were the eleven who had continued with Him in His temptations. To them first descended the commission, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." But, indeed, the ascended

⁶ Isaiah l. 4.

Saviour did not therefore cease to be Himself the preacher of righteousness. No one of the characters which He vouchsafed to assume for our sakes has He laid down; nor shall, till He deliver up the kingdom unto the Father. Just as He rules from behind the veil, and sways the sceptre of His spiritual empire, moderating the violence of adversaries, supplying the wants of His elect, and as in that inner place He ever offers before the eternal throne the sacrifice of Himself, so likewise does He still act as the Prophet of His church, continuing with the successors of the twelve in power and in presence; by them teaching, in them praying, through them, guiding His flock by green pastures and waters of comfort. We regard then the whole body of clergy as the expansion of the idea of Christ Jesus, as the teacher of the world. individual minister is but the persona through which He speaks unto men. Just as the Holy Ghost dwells in the church catholic, and sojourns complete in every body, which He makes His temple, so does Christ continue with the perfect college of His ambassadors, and Himself entire officiate, (if we may so speak,) in the officiations of each several member of the same. St. Chrysostom insists at some length upon this point. engaged in exhorting Christians not to despise the ministrations of the clergy, because of their personal unworthiness, and thus proceeds, "Thou art a sheep, be not busy concerning the Shepherd, lest

thou have to give an account of thy accusations against him."7 But how, it will be said, does he address me without practising himself? He does not speak to thee of himself. If it is to him that you give heed, you have no reward. It is Christ that admonishes thee. What do I say? Not even Paul must you obey, if he speak anything of himself, or any thing human, but the apostle who has Christ speaking in him." And towards the close of the same homily we meet with yet stronger language, "Neither will the righteous man help thee at all, if thou art unfaithful; nor will the base man harm thee, if thou art faithful. Through oxen did God work for the ark when He would save His people. What God bestows is not of such sort as to be effected through the virtue of the priest. whole is of grace, his part is only to open his mouth. God worketh all—the priest doth only fulfil a symbol."8 Another writer, commenting on

⁷ Vid. St. Chrysostomi, in II. Ep. Ad. Timoth. Hom. II. Σὰ πρόβατον ἔι. μὰ τόικυν περιεργάζου τὸν ποιμένα, ἵνα μὰ καὶ ἐφ' οἶς ἐκείνου κατηγορεῖς, εὐθύνας δῷς. Καὶ πῶς ἐμὰι λέγει, φησὶν, ἀυτὸς οὐ ποιῶν; οὐκ αὐτός σοι λέγει. εἰ αὐτῷ πέιθῃ, μισθὸν οὐκ ἔχεις. ὁ Χριστός σοι τᾶυτα παραινῖι. Καὶ τί λέγω; οὐδὲ Παύλψ πέιθεσθαι χρὰ, ἄν τι ἴδιον λέγη, ἄν τι ἀνθρώπινον, ἀλλὰ τῷ ἀποστόλψ τῷ τὸν Χριστὸν ἔχοντι λαλοῦντα ἐν ἑαυτῷ.

⁸ The following is the passage entire:—Ούτε ὁ δίκαιος ἐφελήσει τι, μὴ ὅντος σου πιστου, ούτε ὁ φαῦλος βλάψει τι, ὅντος σου πιστου. Διὰ βοῶν ἐνήργησεν ὁ Θεὸς ἐπὶ τῆς κιβωτου, ὅτε ἐβούλετο σῶσαι τὸν λαόν. μὴ γὰρ ὁ βίος του ἰερέως, μὴ γὰρ ἡ ἀρετὴ τοσουτόν τι συντελεῖ; οὐκ ἔστι τοιαῦτα ἃ χαρίζεται ὁ Θεὸς, ὡς ὑπὸ ἰερατικῆς ἀρετῆς ἀνύεσθαι. τὸ πᾶν τῆς χάριτός ἐστι, τούτου ἐστὶν ἀνοῖξαι

the words recorded by St. John, says. With good reason, Christ containing in Himself all good

μύνον τὸ στόμα τὸ καὶ πᾶν ὁ Θεὸς ἐργάζεται, σύμβολον οὖτος πληροϊ μόνον. ἐννόησον ὅσον ἐστὶ τὸ μέσον Ιωάννου καὶ του Ἰησου. άκουε γάρ Ίωάννου λέγοντος, έγω χρέιαν έχω ύπο σου βαπτισθηναι, καλ, ούκ ελμλ ίκανὸς λύσαι τὸν ιμάντα του ὑποδήματος. ἀλλ' δμως καλ τοσούτου όντος του μέσου, καλ πνευμα κατηνέχθη, όπερ οὐκ ἔιχεν Ἰωάννης. ἐκ γὰρ πληρώματος αὐτοῦ, φησίν, ἡμεῖς πάντες έλάβομεν. άλλ' δμως πρίν ή βαπτισθήναι, οὐ κατηνέχθη οὐ μήν ουδε Ίωαννης επόιησεν αυτό κατενεχθήναι. τι οδν τουτο έργάζεται; **Ίνα μάθης ότι σύμβολον ό ίερεὺς πληροῖ. ὀυδεὶς ἀνθρώπων ἀνθρώπου** τοσουτον αφέστηκεν, δσον Ίωάννης του Ιησου, αλλ' δμως έπ' αυτου κατήλθε το πνευμα, ίνα μάθης δτι το παν ο Θεός εργάζεται, δτι το παν ο Θεός ποιεί. βουλομαί τι παράδοζον είπειν αλλά μή θαυμάσητε, μηδέ θορυβηθήτε. τί δή τουτό έστιν; ή προσφορά ή αὐτή έστι, καν ο τυχών προσενέγκη, καν Παυλος, καν Πέτρος, ή αθτή έστιν, ην ο Χριστος τοῖς μαθηταῖς ἔδωκε, καὶ ην νῦν οι ἱερεῖς ποιδυσιν. ουζεν άυτη ελάττων εκείνης, ότι και τάυτην ούκ άνθρωποι άγιάζουσιν, άλλ' άυτὸς ὁ καὶ έκείνην αγιάσας. Εσπερ γάρ τὰ ρήματα, άπερ ὁ Θεὸς ἐφθέγξατο, τὰ ἀυτά ἐστιν, ἄπερ ὁ ἱερεὺς καὶ νῦν λέγει, ούτω καὶ ἡ προσφορὰ ἡ ἀυτή ἐστι, καὶ τὸ βάπτισμα ὅπερ ἔδωκεν. ούτω τὸ καν τῆς πίστεώς ἐστιν.

9 St. Aug. in Evang. Sec. Joan. Sermo. l. Merito Christus in se habens omnes pastores bonos unum commendat dicens, "Ego sum, pastor bonus. Ego sum, unus sum, mecum in unitate omnes unum sunt.

Unde unus Pastor? Jam dixi pastores quia membra pastoris. Illo capite gaudebant, sub illo capite concordabant, uno spiritu in unius corporis compage vivebant. St. Aug. Tract. xlvi.

Nostis jam in nomine Domini qui sit bonus pastor, et quemadmodum pastores boni membra sint ejus, et ideo pastor sit unus. Tract. xlvii. "Per Christum intro, Christum in me libenter audistis." Id.

Hooker. Eccles. Pol. Bk. v. 77. Whether we preach, pray, baptize, communicate, condemn, give absolution or whatsoever; as disposers of God's mysteries, our words, judgments, acts, and deeds are not ours but the Holy Ghost's.

shepherds, places one before us, saying, "I am the good Shepherd; all are one with Me in unity." And, in another place, "You know who is the good Shepherd, and how good shepherds are His members, and how therefore there is one Shepherd." It is Christ then who still fulfils the pastoral office amongst us; what the minister of the church does upon earth, he does in Christ's power and name. And this doctrine on which we are dwelling seems, in part, to explain that assurance which at the moment must have appeared so incomprehensible to the apostles-"It is expedient for you that I go away." Of no real withdrawal, but simply of His bodily absence did the Redeemer speak, for in another passage he promises, "I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you."10 The presence of the Comforter was the presence of Christ in & new way, and hence the expediency of His bodily departure. In the body He could not have been with each individual of the apostolic band when dispersed upon various provinces of labour. long as they continued together, He could in body as well as spirit cheer, and guide, and counsel; but, once broken up, the fellowship of the apostles must have experienced the need of their Master's presence in a different manner, and therefore removing from them His corporeal presence, He yet left them not. "When He ascended up on high He received

¹⁰ St. John xvi. 7.-xiv. 18.

gifts for men, and He gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers;" and equally with all Himself abode, working by them as deputies, and ratifying their ministries.

Now the thorough recognition of Christ Jesus, as still fulfilling this part amongst us, we propose as the first guard against the abuse of a clergyman's personal influence. What we want our people to appreciate is, not ourselves, but our commission, Christ in us, and by us. There would be no fear of evil if there were a due acknowledgment of His office as the one Shepherd; of the unity of the prophetical character in Him; that He is, from age to age, the minister of the sanctuary; and that this ministration is broken up, as it were, in our hands, so as to be discharged in sundry places, and at sundry times. Great would be the results of a lively persuasion of these truths. Who can measure the increased solemnity of feeling, the increased value for religious ordinances, the increased reverence for the sabbath and the sanctuary, which would ensue if our congregations were to realize their position—not as the hearers of this or that man-not as the attendants upon the ministry of one more or less gifted; -but as a company of Christians assembled together, with the Lord for their Shepherd, to be taught, and warned, and ministered unto by Him, as the Bishop and Pastor

of their souls; if in awful rites they would see Him near;-in Baptism, gathering another lamb into His fold; at Holy Communion, looking up to heaven, giving thanks, breaking the bread, distributing to them? Who would be careless that heard Him speaking? Who irreverent, that by faith saw Him presiding? And again, which of us whom He has sent to be Ilis messengers would be in danger of elevating our individual wills, of thrusting forward our private speculations, of carrying into effect our private fancies, if we on our part realized to the full, that we are as it were only His rod and staff, by which He gathers in the wanderers; these bodies of ours, the Ephod and the breast-plate in which He ministers; these tongues, but instruments for prolonging to the end of time His own gracious utterances, "This is My body and blood of the New Testament?" Which of us would desire to be called father on earth, who felt the presence of Him who is one with our Father in heaven? Who, with a vivid apprehension of his vocation to be the medium of the operations of that Divine Being who is our Master, even Christ, would not shrink from every act which might seem so to individualize him as to justify, in his case, the admonition, "My brethren, be not many masters?"

II. But there is a second rule, which will yet more narrowly define the limits of personal influence. We have said that no single presbyter is to supersede the idea of Christ's own ministerial presence; we suggest, secondly, that neither is he so to occupy the minds of his people as to weaken their conception of the one church.

It would be easy to shew that the human race was so constituted by the Creator, as to combine into societies under certain laws. In the divine arrangement of families, we have the primary type of kingdoms and states. "Go to now, let us build us a city," the cry pregnant with terrible rebellion, which gathered into one spot the builders of Babel, was in fact only the abuse of the principle of God's own implanting, that it is not good for man to be alone; that he is essentially a social being, fitted and intended to rest upon his fellows, to do good and to receive good. Now this natural tendency and qualification of mankind to unite in bodies political, was adopted and brought into use by our Lord. In founding His church, He did not create a new thing; He took that which was in man, and sanctified it to His own purposes. In directing that those who believed should be added to a regularly constituted body, He hallowed and sanctioned the disposition to join together, of which He had Himself been the Author, when by Him the Father made the worlds. He found (for He had so willed,) that the generations of men were adapted for union, and He erected therefore in their midst a kingdom never to be destroyed, endowing it with authority judicial and legislative; judicial,12 to try its sub-

¹² St. Matthew xviii. 17.

jects, to admonish, and finally to reject; legislative,13 to enact laws for the administration of its internal affairs, and for its guidance in the warfare with the gates of hell, with the sole restriction, that they should not militate against the fundamental constitution by Himself ordained. He thus sent not abroad His apostles as simple missionaries, to declare certain truths. The dissemination of Christianity was more than the publication of doctrine; it was the casting sure and deep the foundations of a mighty kingdom, regularly organised, amid the kingdoms of the earth; and hence the opposition which the disciples met. The Roman government soon became alive to the fact, that Christianity was no mere doctrinal system. Rome never objected to novel teaching, however extravagant (witness her readiness to add the idols of conquered nations to her own); but she recoiled from an imperium in imperio, and this she was wise enough to discern the church to be. Now if this be the truth, it is obviously most important that every member of the church should be brought to the thorough acknowledgment of it. There is great peril of the social character of our most holy faith being lost sight of. Serious men are often tempted to stop short at personal religion; to forget that no man liveth unto himself, and no man dieth unto himself. whose interests embrace a wider sphere, are again frequently disposed to confine them, at any rate, to

¹³ Acis xv.

their own parish; and in many ways the same tendency is evinced. A congregation is very commonly in danger of isolating itself; and this at once leads to the undue exaltation of the pastor. His practises, his views, his teaching are all in all. are estimated according as they harmonize with or vary from this standard. And for this evil we know but one remedy, viz. that the people be taught as a primary thing to recognize themselves as part of the universal church, and that they realize, in all its length and breadth, the unity of this church. We would have them made to recollect every hour, that they are not the body, but a portion of the body; that legislative power resides not in a part, but the whole, so that they are to keep in view not only what is or appears to be most edifying to themselves, but what is most agreeable to the laws of the catholic fellowship to which they belong; that their affections are not to be centered upon their minister, holy and gifted though he be; that he is but the medium through which they are to be gathered round the church and its Divine Head. If the clergyman personally be the ultimate object of attachment, it is obvious that the interest of the people must ebb and flow, since he is liable to removal and death. We argue, therefore, that it is our duty to keep ourselves most studiously in the back ground. Not the minister, but the church, into which preacher and hearers have been alike baptized, is to be prominently set forward. Lead

on the minds of men to this, make them feel verily that they stand not alone, that they are all members of a corporation; gather up their musings, their sympathies, their habits of reverence, and fasten them hereon, and there will be no fear of love waxing cold. The priests of the sanctuary pass away: on the sanctuary itself time sets no mark; it was with the fathers in their wanderings, with the martyrs in their pains. Curtained by the folds of its pavilion, they expected the bright coming of the Lord, and now beneath the same shade it is ours to watch and to wait. Aaron-like, between the living and the dead, unchangeable as her Lord, stands the one church, one in doctrine, in discipline, the nursing mother of immortal spirits from generation to generation. In every thing she is the same In her solemn litanies we from the beginning. catch the accents by which those long since asleep in Jesus made known to Him their wants in the days of their flesh; in her sacraments we see the means by which they were strengthened and sus-Under her Divine head she is exactly tained. suited to excite, and freely demands all our love and fealty; checking our wilfulness in whatever way it may discover itself, in the midst of changing theories of temporal government, of progressive alterations in the maxims of science, herself admitting neither jot nor tittle to be varied, holding fast the faith once delivered, allowing no development, sanctioning no curtailment, never exhorting to enter

on new paths of discovery, but to walk in the old ways, awing us with the memories of the past, indentifying us with those gone before, ever breathing in our ears the earnest charge, that we obey the doctrine delivered unto us, and "Be not many masters."

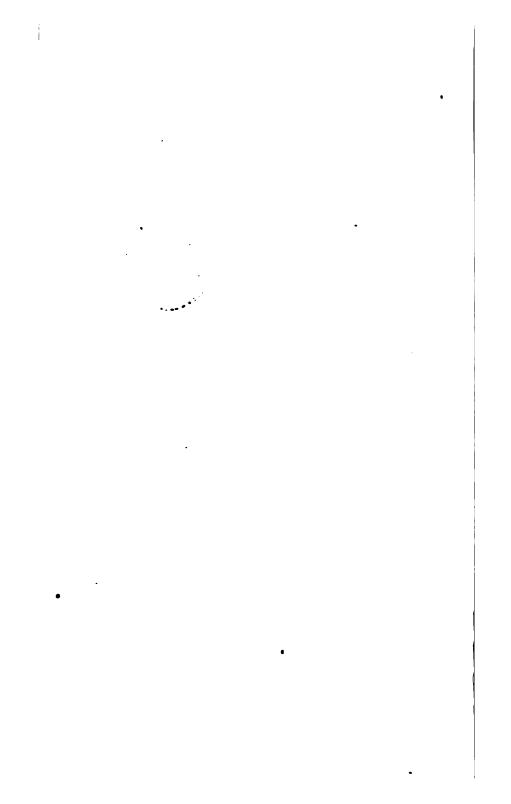
And here we seem to have arrived at two limits, within which the personal influence of a minister of the gospel may be left dominant. It is not to supersede the view of Christ's presence in our assemblies as the good Shepherd, it is not to interfere with the claims of the church to our first attachment and loyalty. Within these limits we know of no restraint which need be placed upon it. Very marvellous is the power for good or ill with which God has invested individual character. We have heard how the existence of a few righteous men would have stayed the fiery rain, when about to burst forth upon Sodom; how the name of David ameliorated God's wrath against Jerusalem. Oh! who can tell with what a vehement cry the lives of a righteous priesthood may plead before the eternal throne for a church and a land? We know something of the effect with which such lives preach to the people. Nay, the influence which ability and eloquence procure is legitimate, for eloquence is God's gift to the best member that we have. It is our especial office to be the salt of the earth, and we are not unconscious how even from the dead saint there issues a fragrance cleansing and moving the hearts of posterity. Death for the holy hath no bonds. Though long since passed away, they still perform a work among us. Moses in his meekness, and Abraham in his faith, and Jacob in his thankfulness, stars differing from one another in glory, are names familiar in our households. The process of conversion is best carried on by a hallowed example, and the influence thus acquired perishes not, even when the righteous man is taken away. All that we have to do is so to moderate it, that it shall not wound the unity of churches one with another, or the unity of parishes in a particular church.

Would to God, men and brethren, there were among us a greater desire for this unity; —unity in the abstract is little coveted. What each man wants is his own unity, a unity which shall make the rest adopt his own ways and thoughts. Contrariwise we argue that it is a holy thing to have a vearning for the oneness of the church, without reference to the manner. We do not mean that it is to be sought at the expense of principle, for we may be one with each other yet not in God; but we are not bound to be ever damping our ardour for this good and pleasant thing with cold calculations of difficulties, and of the process by which it may be accomplished, although we are constrained to make our own, day by day, the Saviour's prayer that we may be one. And if there be in us this single-hearted longing for unity, very careful shall we be of putting ourselves forward. It is a vast

responsibility which a man incurs when he makes himself notorious as a teacher: even when his call is clear it is yet a fearful one to follow. That there have been different schools of divinity is at once a proof of our frailty. If we were perfect we should all see every part of divine truth in the same proportions. That, therefore, there should have been a school of Augustine, and of Cyprian, is a result of human fallibility. Even apparent differences are so far violations of unity, they are ripples as it were upon the surface of that majestic tide in which the one faith has rolled down to us through the valley of time. We say, then, that a man should shrink from rendering himself prominent by peculiarities of teaching and exposition, from adding himself as a new master in Israel to the many which have been.

There is little to add. We are to recommend not ourselves, to make men love not us, but the spiritual kingdom of which we are officers. With this safeguard we are so to live and preach as to draw others after us. Oh! the lives of priest and people should rise upwards like a solemn antiphon, the depths of the altar sounding forth the appeal, "Be ye followers of me as I am of Christ," whilst from the streets and lanes of the city should be heard the awful respond, "Where thou goest I will go, where thou diest I will die, thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God!"

J. Ridler, Printer, High Street, Bristol.



A SERMON FOR THE TIMES.

THE DUTY OF THE CHURCH TO PRAY FOR THE QUEEN AND GOVERNMENT.

ASERMON

PREACHED IN THE

PARISH CHURCH OF SAINT LAWRENCE

SOUTHAMPTON,

APRIL 9th, 1848,

BY ELDRED WOODLAND, A.B.,

RECTOR OF THE UNITED PARISHES OF SAINT LAWRENCE AND SAINT JOHN.

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.

"My son, fear thou the Lord and the king, and meddle not with them that are given to change."—Prov. xxiv. 21.

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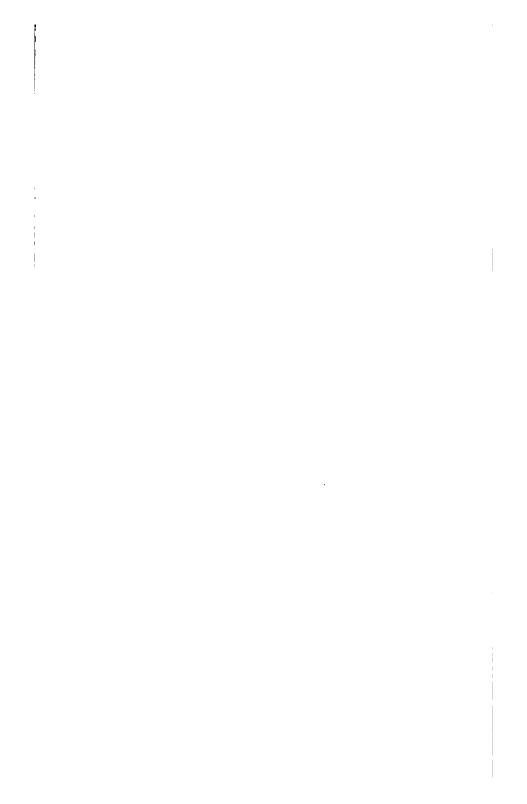
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In offering this Sermon to public notice, the writer feels called upon to observe, that it was not originally intended for publication. The hope, that it may be serviceable to check the progress of disaffection, and to increase loyalty of feeling, upon the only safe and certain grounds, has led him to comply with the request of several of his congregation and friends, to offer it to public perusal. If it be complained, that it is too discursive as a composition, he would solicit the favour of its being borne in mind, that it was composed as a Parochial Address, in order to discharge his duty to his Parishioners, with reference to the political condition of Europe, in the present exciting times; and by no means intended to press its way beyond the limits of his own Ministry. If, however, it can only prove serviceable to the cause of peace and religion, he will have no occasion to regret its appearance, wheresoever it may be directed.

Southampton, April 12th, 1848.



A SERMON.

1 TIMOTHY, Chap. ii. 1-4.

"I EXHORT THEREFORE, THAT, FIRST OF ALL, SUPPLICATIONS, PRAYERS, INTERCESSIONS, AND GIVING OF THANKS, BE MADE FOR ALL MEN; FOR KINGS, AND FOR ALL THAT ARE IN AUTHORITY; THAT WE MAY LEAD A QUIBT AND PRACEABLE LIFE IN ALL GODLINESS AND HONESTY. FOR THIS IS GOOD AND ACCEPTABLE IN THE SIGHT OF GOD OUR SAVIOUR; WHO WILL HAVE ALL MEN TO BE SAVED, AND TO COME UNTO THE KNOW-LEDGE OF THE TRUTH."

THE Church of Christ is essentially an instrument of peace. She constitutes the oil, which God has thrown upon the troubled waters of human society. Never, therefore, does she wander farther from her purpose, and more grievously frustrate the end of her existence, than when she descends from her high position, and mingles in the arena of the strife and turmoil of human life. It is true, her lot is cast there—but it is, as the war preventer and the peacemaker. She is bound to imitate the example of

her great original, who is Prince of Peace, and who descended from the realms of bliss and glory from the bosom of His Father, not only to prepare the way for our reconciliation with God, but to be Himself our sacrifice and propitiation for sin. Consistently with her mission, she is enjoined not to use the instruments of destruction in the propagation of her faith. Like the temple of old, her spiritual fabric must be raised without the noise of axes or hammers. however, only in appearance, that she is defenceless against hostile assaults; she is, in reality, especially defended; for "no weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper,"* is a decree above all earthly authority, which she bears upon her banners. How conspicuously does her character, as a messenger of peace, stand forth in her conduct with reference to the governments and authorities of Heathenism. They were not only idolatrous, but frequently set themselves in active hostility against her. Often did they give her sons and daughters to the lions, the stake, and the sword. Did she raise the arm of defiance? Did she invoke the curse of heaven upon her persecutors? She prayed for them: they cursed, but she blessed. She invoked the blessing of God upon the

^{*} Isalah liv. 17.

councils of states, even when those councils meditated her destruction, for this she had been taught as a primary duty,—"that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men, for kings, and for all that are in authority."

We need scarcely observe that her position, which was indeed aggressive, rendered such a line of conduct absolutely necessary. She was destined to overthrow the powers of heathenism, "to bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron:"* and yet, it must be a bloodless victory—a strifeless conquest—a battle and war of love. To have appeared in hostile array, would have obliterated her credentials,-frustrated her design,-and set the world in determined array against her. While most aggressive, she moved only in peace: while mighty to conquer, she appeared devoid of every means of assault. Hence, the consideration, with which the Apostle follows up his injunction that "prayer should be offered for all men; for kings and all that are in authority," obtains increased importance: hence he sets before his converts the desirableness of civil peace and quietness, and of the Church's avoiding the jealousy, if she could not have the sanction and cheerful confidence

Psalm cxlix, 8.

of earthly powers, that we may "lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty."

It is indeed most interesting to trace the Church's progress through the past, especially through the earlier ages of her existence; but our business lies chiefly with the present times. is still the same creature that he ever was. The more we learn of him in antiquity, and the more we see of him in modern times, the more will our conviction of this be increased. His wants. his dangers, his temptations, his desires, his passions, and his mode of expressing and of pursuing them, The one set of lessons therefore laid the same. down for his observance in one age is sufficient The map which the Holy Spirit has for another. furnished us with, marking the quicksands, and shoals, and rocks, as well as every favouring circumstance of life, is all sufficient for our need. The Holy Scriptures provide us with a regimen suitable for every age, and every combination of They speak to us in all our capacities, events. and duties, and stations. In our text we hear of our duties to our civil rulers, and have to consider the encouragements, with which those duties are enforced.

The Apostle is giving instructions as to the conduct of the worship of Christians.

The Church is often represented in the cha-

racter of an intercessor. Prayer for herself is an important duty. Intercession for others no less so. Her heart must be enlarged in imitation of her Master, who gave himself for the propitiation of the sins of the world. The world then craves, and is enjoined, an interest in her prayers. "I exhort therefore, that, first of all, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men." But God's care of his people is special, and therefore he specifies the most important special objects of intercession,—"For kings, and for all that are in authority."

Thus it is seen, that it is an absolute duty incumbent upon the Church to pray for God's blessing upon the established authorities.

It is a happy thing for any country, when, by the course of time, the character of its government and the title of its rulers have been acknowledged and substantiated. Essential indeed to the welfare of man is stability of government; else the Holy Spirit had not, in so many passages of the Word, defined our duty with reference to it. In our text we are commanded to give them a constant interest in our prayers; the wise man also thus exhorts us—"My son, fear thou the Lord and the king; and meddle not with them that are given to change: for their calamity shall rise suddenly; and who knoweth the ruin of

them both?"* while St. Paul further enforces these duties—"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: for he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God. a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not evil. only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For, for this cause pay you tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour."+

We are well aware, that we are touching delicate grounds; and that we now moot a subject, with regard to which the disposition of people is sensibly alive. It is, however, the duty

^{*} Prov. xxiv. 21-22. † Romans xiii. 1-7.

of a Christian Minister to be faithful to his trust. His views of duty must not oscillate with the His standard of propriety is always one. He is the reprover of men's manners; the detector of the symptoms of national declension. He is the sentinel upon his watch-tower—an elevated one: and if he is faithful in the post, has peculiar promises of discernment, support, and blessing. We do not arrogate more for ourselves in such assertions than the holy Scriptures justify. And they are combined and accordant symptoms of the times,—indications of an approaching crisis,—on the one hand, that the voice of Christ's Ministers is so little heeded in the direction of men's manners and in the forming of public opinion; - and on the other hand, that men are so hasty, intemperate, and ill-judged in their estimation of their rulers, and in their conduct towards them: -- of the one saith the Holy Spirit "they walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government: presumptuous are they, self-willed; they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities."* Of the other He saith -"The days will come when they will not endure sound doctrine: but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers having itching ears, and they shall turn away their ears from the

truth, and shall be turned unto fables."* Of both He saith-"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away."+ There is one feature, above all striking in this catalogue of crimes; and that is the professedly religious state of society accompanying the fearful development of wickedness, "having the form of Godliness." It would not be difficult in the history of passing events, both at home and abroad, to avail ourselves of many facts, which accord with the prophetic language, and stamp the times with a mournful and ominous mark.

Is there not almost a deification of mind in the present day? When was there greater intellectual enlightenment? When had knowledge made such rapid strides? and yet when so little humility? When was every man so self-sufficient? We fear that we have a novel crucible in which to pass a fiery ordeal. Society has passed through

^{* 2} Tim. iv. 3, 4.

^{† \$} Tim. iii, 1-5.

one, when few men could read, and literature was confined within a few walls, and isolated places. It proved that the heart of man, in ignorance, was alienated from God through sin and wicked works; and now we fear, that we shall pass, or rather are passing, through a different trial, through the age of knowledge—an age which shall prove, and is proving in tenfold greater measure, that man's heart, in his highest state of civilization and enlightenment, is alienated from God.

Perhaps when refinement and knowledge shall have done their utmost for mankind, when all the elements shall have been reduced to the greatest permissible state of servitude to his will; when nature's mines shall have been exhausted, and all her hidden laws revealed,—man's pride, running parallel with his intellect; at that awful climax, when the proof, that the "heart is alienated," and "that the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God," is most complete, shall the sign of the coming of the Son of Man appear.

Many of us have mistaken knowledge for religion. The masses of the people, left to themselves, through years, which England may yet live to rue, have provided knowledge for themselves; but it is the knowledge which man's heart prefers when kept aloof from Christ; it is

the knowledge which embitters his own days, disturbs the peace of nations, and brings destruction in its train;—it is the knowledge which brings power, without the wisdom to direct it; which raises the storm that it cannot quell, and propels down the inclined plane of life, with fearful velocity, the whole train of society, with no one hand experienced to lessen, or turn off the raging vapour.

It is no slight proof of what we assert, the fact which we cannot deny,—that we are blotting from the catalogue of sins, offences, which God has forbidden, and which await His displeasure. Who hears of rebellion as a thing forbidden? Who trembles for its consequences? Who regards the crowned head, the senator, the magistrate as sacred, although God has thrown around them so hallowed an atmosphere; "Thou shalt not revile the gods, nor curse the ruler of thy people;"* and, although he has ordained them an interest in our prayers? Surely the current of popular opinion in many portions of the world, and to too great extent in our own,-or God's merciful provisions for men's happiness, are out of place: Which? it behoves us to decide.

We live in eventful times: upon us the ends of the world have come: men's hearts fail them

Exod. xxii. 28.

for fear, and for looking after those things that are coming upon the earth, for the powers of heaven are being shaken. Kingdoms and thrones that have withstood the shock of embattled hosts, and the wear and tear of time, are tottering to their fall; or are no more. All are anxiously inquiring where is safety? We fly from country to country, but rumours of war and strife have preceded us. All Christendom is in commotion. Whither then shall we fly? "God is a very present refuge in time of trouble." "Salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks." must be our hope, where lies our duty: it is to trust in God and approach Him in prayer. we would especially urge upon all, that as Englishmen and Christians, they bear upon their hearts before Almighty God, their Government, the Queen, her Ministers, and the Parliament. Such extraordinary crises require extraordinary efforts. Let the effort of the heart accompany that of the head and hand; and faith be the minister of duty. Remember, that however well devised our plans, however extensive our preparations for the preservation of the peace and order of society, "that it is not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit saith the Lord of hosts." The evil spirit from the Lord, that troubles with discord and insubordination the whole continent of Europe,

why should he not cross the channel? What voice shall say hitherto, and no farther—but God's ?— And have we done nothing to provoke his wrath? Have we no national sins, for which we should humble ovrselves before him? We trembled but as yesterday, when famine began to stalk through the land. A national humiliation was appointed. We humbled ourselves before God. We were heard, and were most mercifully de-But was the humiliation anything better than that of Ahab,* who humbled himself before the Lord, and obtained for his family a temporary respite of the ills, with which God meditated its affliction? The sword now hangs over us-another of God's sore judgments,-and it wants but his command to be bathed in the blood of the slain. Oh England! what is thy destiny, asks every heart, after thy exalted greatnessthine unexampled renown? Our refuge is in God: we approach Him in prayer. hearts turn to Him. Let us constitute the land what it once was, the bulwark of protestantism; the armoury out of which religion drew her most polished shafts. England has gained but little since she began to betray the Ark of the Lord. And from the time, that she symbolized with popery, she appears to have come in for her

^{* 1}st Kings, xxi. 29.

measure of the vial of God's wrath. True, she has had signal mercies attending her in her colonies; but there she occupies a missionary character in the voluntary efforts of her people. The vast continent of India is a field of labour for her philanthropic sons. Africa shares in her missionary enterprise; and China begins to listen to the gospel at her lips. Abroad she is not so much altered as at home: Abroad she is missionary as a people: At home she is less Protestant, and therefore less Christian, as a Government.

Does it not strike every reflecting mind, as worthy of deep remark, that discontent, discord, and anarchy, or prostration of national power and imbecility characterize at this time the whole of what we would denominate Popedom, or well nigh every country within which the religion of the pope of Rome is generally, or to a great extent, professed: France, Germany, Austria, the Italian States, Switzerland, Spain, Portugal. If we go farther from home, to the new world, we have the little States of South America suffering from misrule and continual wars. In North America, Mexico—ill-governed, prostrate, and enfeebled.

On the other hand, if we would regard those portions of the world which are peculiarly Pro-

testant, we shall find the picture comparatively cheerful. Yet, here also, we must take a twofold view: for here we shall discover facts that strengthen and help on the conclusion, which is ready to force itself upon our minds. What scene then does the United Kingdom present? The Protestant portion of it, notwithstanding the warning, under which we rest, preeminently blessed: unhappy Ireland, lowest in the scale of nations: our very Colonies, not being peculiarly popish, enjoying, under our protection, the most profound repose: and America, democratic America, as though forms of government to Almighty God were but of secondary moment, sharing with ourselves the cup of order and felicity. We know, we should be cautious in our interpretation of God's Providence. with such facts, and such comparisons, apart from all other arguments, we might be forgiven, if we could not resist the temptation to think, there's something in what we have adduced.

Our danger is unquestionably great; and we again repeat it, "our hope is in the name of the Lord." It is among England's safeguards, that her Government has the prayers of a National Church continually. It matters not, whether the crowned head be popular or unpopular, whether the ministry be whig or tory, whether the measures of the ministry be such as the nation approve of, or disapprove of;—it is not left to the caprice, or the memory, or the ability of the officiating Minister,—the bell never invokes England's people to assemble around England's altars, but it calls them to prayer "for all men, for the Queen, and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life." Oh our services are scriptural, beautifully scriptural, and appropriate to all the wants of society in this, as well nigh every other respect.

More could not be done by man to secure due observance of the apostolical exhortation: rests with England's sons to avail themselves of these means, and with united hearts to represent the necessities of their country at a throne of The fame of a thousand years now trembles in the balance: England's position, as the first of nations, is in the hands of her sons! She may yet be great. Sodom had been spared for ten righteous;-Israel was spared for "seven thousand that had not bowed the knee to Baal:" and surely we may hope, that more than that number of England's sons are earnest and consistent before God; mourn over the sins and perils of the nation; deprecate his wrath, and carry on the controversy with Him. Let us all rise to a sense of duty. Let us seek that we may be guided

more and more by His will; and daily becoming more fully, and more practically acquainted with His truth as it is in Christ Jesus,—may be the salt of the earth—the conservators of our Constitution—and the hearts of affection upon which the Throne is built.

The peace and order and well-being of society are perilled. A spirit of insubordination is abroad. A hundred thousand voices are ready to declare, that rebellion is no sin. Men's hearts are stout against the Lord. His anointed are not sacred before them. Scenes, which for generations have not been known upon our shores, may yet be re-enacted. The pillar and cloud of fire, that have so long attended us, appear about to forsake us: and the Egyptians on one hand, and the perils of the sea on the other, hem us in. We have long enjoyed a state of things preeminently favourable to religion. We have had a quiet and peaceable life—that kind of life which the Apostle represents in our text, as so serviceable to the cause of religion; and for the sake of which, in a great measure, he enjoins us to pray for all in authority, as God's ministers who are appointed for this very thing.

We think the history of religion in our own country, for the last thirty years, strikingly illustrates the force of the Apostle's language.

During the years of war that preceded, it was little or nothing that was done for the sake of God. Men's minds were kept in a continual state of excitement, by the ferment of war, by the dread of defeat, and the flush of victory. generation passed, and the days of peace began. Religion and science arose: but the latter soon outstripped the former, and men made haste to be worldly wise. Many exertions were however made for the cause of Christianity. The truth. which had been well nigh forgotten, broke forth with ancient lustre. Its power was felt The societies for religious puronce more. poses, already in existence, received great acquisitions of members and supplies. societies were formed; Churches, and other religious edifices and Schools were reared; the salvation of souls appeared to be going forward. It was a season of national repose, like that of which the Apostle speaks in the early history of the Church-"Then had the Churches rest, and walking in the fear of the Lord, were multipled." + The merciful design of God for the salvation of souls, and for bringing them to the knowledge of the truth, was fearlessly set forth. Every man worshipped "God under his own vine, and his own fig tree, none making him afraid."

Truly we may say, "the lines have fallen to us in pleasant places." But could we expect this state of things to last? Would it be in accordance with the past history of the Church, that her circumstances should cease to alternate! True, it was a season favourable to godliness and honesty, calculated to increase the number of the brethren. True, it was a season of almost unprecedented grace to the whole nation at large; but it was not the day of trial—the season of affliction—the time in which God glorifies himself, in the constancy and perseverance of his people, under hardships and distress. with the footmen; but now perhaps the swellings of Jordan are to be forded—the winter torrent to be stemmed. The garden, perhaps, must now be weeded:—it has run riot, and evil weeds have luxuriated under the same sun, and the same dews, that have fostered the growth of more useful plants. Now, perhaps, it must be made manifest, who are the Lord's and who are not.

Again, if harder times are at hand, who knows, but that with them, after such means of grace have been been brought to bear upon society, too fruitlessly and in vain,—who knows, but that with them, there may come, as a retribution, the withdrawal, or the obscuration of the lamp of truth, or at least increased indifference

in the nation's heart to the solemn and soulstirring appeals of God's word?

Impending national visitations may be averted. God gave us but the other day a pledge and proof of this: and he is ready to give us another; -" Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of hosts."* "Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal you."+ national regenerations, it rests with each individual to amend himself; and he is not a good citizen, nor a good subject, nor a lover of his country, who lives in conscious alienation of heart from the Lord. We are all prone to see another's faults, long before our own,-to call them beams, while we diminish our own into motes. state of mind stands effectually in the way of national improvement. We must be chiefly concerned to look into ourselves, to discover unwholesome truth,—to correct erroneous and longestablished impressions and habits,—to frame the whole heart, and man according to God's word. Difficult task!—One under a sense of the difficulty of which, we may well shrink, when we know ourselves; but in the performance of which there is a God, ready to support us, waiting to assist us, and rejoicing over us already, if we are in any way disposed to Him;—not standing aloof, while

Mal. iii. 7.
 + Jer. iii 22.

we are coming to Him, but rising, while we are yet a great way off, and running to meet us, and falling upon our neck and kissing us. Test then your sincerity, since you say, God, I come, by proposing the observance of some hitherto unpalatable duty, some neglected privilege: sacrifice your objections, and embrace the whole word and commandment of God. Oh! that the heart of this people would bend, as the heart of one man. Soon should we exclaim, lengthen our cords, and strengthen our stakes-make room for us;—and like Israel with Judah of old, we should vie with one another in our zeal to restore Christ to his lawful kingdom of man's heart, from which, by man's rebellion he was expelled. Great God! may the avarice—and self-seeking-and the breach of the bonds of brotherhood—the superciliousness of wealth, and the disaffection of poverty, and the widening breach between high and low, and rich and poor,—that have prevailed amongst us, be healed. May the secondary importance, which we have attached to the divine word, and future and spiritual things, yield place to an earnest giving heed to the things that belong to our everlasting peace. May thy word honoured—sabbaths hallowed-crowded sanctuaries, and faithful recipients of Christ's mystical body and blood, and hearts

rich in charity and hope, with all their attendant graces, testify of us, that we are not a thankless nation—an impenitent nation—a sinfulfilling nation. May we profit by thy warnings: may we work while it is called to-day, and avert that awful and unending night's overtaking us, "in which no man can work."

We are not without hope; something of the native firmness and dignity of British character, based, as we trust it is, upon protestant principles, by God's blessing, yet remains. Among our rulers, and among our people, there are prayers, which, we would fain hope, must be heard;—efforts, that must be blessed;—an energy and unity still perceptible, ready for any emergency, and which, as he has already in a thousand instances, may God direct and prosper in its righteous extremity.

Lovers of order! Lovers of peace! Lovers of godliness! Lovers of honesty! Whatever changes, whatever perils await us, longsuffering and mercy in success must be ours. Submission to the will of God in reverses. Conscious of our demerit, when smitten into the place of dragons, we will bow before his throne, and confess "Thou art righteous, O Lord!" and doest good continually." And when lifted up out of distress we will take up our theme, and sing a "non nobis Domine."

Go forth then, in these principles, conscious in your might, to contemplate the perils at a distance, and the perils almost at hand; and to trace them with unshaken heart and constancy, should they come home; to behold the thickening clouds, that may be gathering in the distance, roll their dark forms nearer and nearer, till, all the heavens shut out, the storm perchance shall break in all its fury. Unscathed its lightnings shall play around thy head. Its thunders awake no throbbing in thy breast. "A thousand shall fall by thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand, but it shall not come nigh thee."* Prayer be Trust in God your consolation. your refuge. Intercession, earnest intercession for all men, for the Queen, and all that are in authority, your unfailing duty;—and so the days of sorrow shall be numbered: and we shall be comforted "again after the time that thou hast plagued us, and for the years wherein we have suffered adversity." + Amid the perplexities of life, the distress of nations, the fall of thrones. and the ruin of empires, and the risings and commotions of peoples, let this be your rejoicing. "The Lord is king, be the people never so impatient: he sitteth between the cherubim, be the earth never so unquiet." Therefore will

Psalm xci, 7. † Psalm xc. 15. † Psalm xcix, 1.

we not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the hills be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof rage and swell, and though the mountains shake at the tempest of the same. There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God."

• Psalm xlvi. 1, 4.

THE END.

W. SHARLAND, PRINTER, SOUTHAMPTON.

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RIGHTEOUSNESS EXALTETH A NATION:

A SERMON

PREACHED IN

WESTMINSTER ABBEY

ON

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 1848,

BY

CHR. WORDSWORTH, D.D.



LONDON:

RIVINGTONS, ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD AND WATERLOO-PLACE. 1848.



TO THE

VERY REV. WILLIAM BUCKLAND, D.D., F.R.S., DEAN OF WESTMINSTER,

AND OF THE MOST HONOURABLE ORDER OF THE BATH,

THIS SERMON,

PRINTED BY HIS DESIRE,

IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,

BY HIS OBEDIENT FAITHFUL SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

Cloisters, Westminster, Feb. 28, 1848.

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SERMON.

"Righteousness exalteth a Nation."-Prov. xIV. 34.

It must be confessed by all who acknowledge the Scriptures to be the Word of God, that the Supreme Governor of the World is our Blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. He possesses this Universal Sovereignty, first, by right of Creation. By Him, says St. John,* were all things made, and without Him was not anything made that was made. By Him, says St. Paul, + were all things created that are in Heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be Thrones or Dominions, or Principalities or Powers; all things were created by Him and for Him. Secondly, Christ has this Sovereignty by right of Redemption. The God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, says St. Paul, hath raised Him from the dead, and hath set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all Principality and Power, and Might, and Dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in

^{*} John i. 4. † Col. i. 16. ‡ Eph. i. 17—22.

that which is to come; and hath put all things under His feet. And our Blessed Lord Himself sums up His own royal prerogatives in the words ALL power is given unto ME in Heaven and in Earth.*

Necessary it is, my brethren, that all who would examine the causes of strength and prosperity to a Nation should ever remember this grand cardinal Truth,—that Jesus Christ is the Creator and Governor of the world, and that every child of man who breathes, is, by the very fact of his existence, a subject of Christ's sway.

But this is not all. Christ is Lord of the World. and of all men, not only in a temporal sense, but also in a spiritual. According to His will, as He himself has declared, the field is the world,+ that is, the whole world is, in His intention and design, a sacred field, a Church; and at His Incarnation Christ came to take this kingdom to Himself; as a mighty Conqueror He redeemed it from bondage, and purchased it with His own blood; and He, its Heavenly King, has incorporated the Universal Church, by a mystical union, with Himself, so that He deigns to call it His own Body, and knits all its members to Himself as their Head, on whom they depend for spiritual life, and to whom they are bound by the laws of Faith and Obedience.

Such is the relation in which, as men and as

^{*} Matth. xxviii. 18.

Christians, we stand to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ...

The due sense of this relation, and the right discharge of our consequent duties, is in the Christian Scriptures called *Righteousness*. Let us now proceed to inquire how in this sense it is true, in the words of our text, that *Righteousness exalteth a nation*.

And here we may be met by the question,—If Righteousness exalteth a nation, how can it be explained that ancient *Heathen* nations—for instance, those of Greece or Rome—possessed vast power, and enjoyed great prosperity? They certainly were not righteous, in your sense of the term; yet they were exalted. How, then, do you reconcile this fact with the assertion that Righteousness exalteth a nation?

To this I reply,—First; we must clearly understand what we mean by national exaltation. If we mean by it success in arms, or literary and scientific attainments, or the enjoyment of earthly delights, then, indeed, we grant that these heathen nations were exalted. But, though we readily allow that these things which we have enumerated may justly be regarded as desirable accessories of national greatness, yet it can never be conceded by the Christian patriot, that they constitute the exaltation of a people. No; it is the moral dignity, it is the spiritual elevation, of the national mind; it is the love of what is true and holy, and great,

and noble, and enduring; it is the disdain of whatever is base, false, and fleeting that makes the true grandeur of a people. It is the mutual love and respect which binds one class of society to another that constitutes its real strength. Not the brilliant and short-lived flashes of military glory, but the diffusive and steady light of social confidence and domestic peace is genuine national hap-Let us not, then, be dazzled by the external brilliance of the great Nations of Antiquity, but let us remember the misery and the vice which lurked beneath the specious surface. Let us recollect the wretched condition of the vast population of Slaves which crowded their splendid capitals; let us remember the degraded state in which woman existed there; let us think of the deadly vices by which the vitals of society were devoured: and we shall not hesitate to confess that not military or naval glory, nor vast extent of empire, nor great commercial activity, nor accumulation of boundless wealth, nor yet Literature and Science, nor all the graceful arts of peace,precious as these things are, when used as instruments of God's glory and man's good,—are able to exalt a nation, without Righteousness.

And, further, it must be observed that these heathen nations to which we have referred did, in a certain sense, flourish by means of *Religion*. A certain Religion they had, of which some elements were derived from the Light of Nature, or from

primeval Tradition, or from Conscience planted in the breast of man,—that is, from the Divine Source of all Truth, God himself. In their most glorious days they believed the existence of an unseen Power who took cognizance of their actions, blessing and aiding those who served him, and punishing those who disobeyed him. In worshipping false Gods they did indeed greatly err; but, in believing the existence of a Superior Agent whom they called God, and in fearing him, they did not err, but thought and acted rightly. They had a Religion, though a corrupt one; and by means of this Religion, as far it was true, they flourished. The truths which it contained concerning invisible powers and a future state of retribution, produced whatever was most sublime and beautiful in their Literature and Arts, and engendered whatever was most virtuous and heroic in their achievements. They owed their national glory to those gleams of Righteousness which glimmered among them; and when this light waned and was bedimmed, and at length died away,-when the purer part, the bright ore, of their Religion was smelted away, and nothing but the dross remained,—when the Nation sunk into Infidelity,—then its character became more and more degenerate, then its courage drooped, its love languished, its graces faded away, and the whole framework of society was disorganised and dissolved.

Thus in their former exaltation, as far as they were exalted, and in their subsequent decline and dissolution, even the heathen nations of antiquity bear practical testimony to the truth of the words of Scripture, Righteousness exalteth a nation.

And here let us observe, my brethren, that our case differs widely from theirs. If we lose our Christianity as a Nation, we cannot hope for any thing in its place even so good as their Paganism. No; if Righteousness loses its hold upon us as a State, we shall fall down at once into Infidelity; and then we must look to become the victims of more than all the vice and misery which Heathen nations suffered when they sunk from Superstition into Atheism. We must expect to be the objects of the fiercest wrath and severest chastisement of Almighty God, for we shall be much more guilty than they were, by apostatizing from His written Truth, and by rebelling against His known Will.

This objection then being removed, let us now proceed to examine, how Righteousness exalteth a nation.

First, then, we affirm that Righteousness, and Righteousness alone, qualifies men to govern well: and is thus the cause of exaltation to a people.

When God Himself gave directions to Moses what kind of persons to set over the people, He said, Thou shalt provide, out of all the people, able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetous-

ness: and King David said on his death-bed. He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God. + Hence in the inaugural ceremony in which the Kings of Israel were enthroned, the Volume of the Law of God was by Divine appointment delivered to them; and they were commanded to transcribe it with their own hands, I and to retain the copy so made always by their side, that they might govern according to its precepts. The BIBLE, my brethren, is, or ought to be, the Manual of Kings; and no one is qualified to govern, who in the administration of public affairs does not habitually consult and constantly obey it. This is clearly evident from God's own command to the Rulers of His people, to meditate on His Law, day and night. This book of the Law (said God) \(\shall \) shall not depart from thy mouth; for then thou shalt make thy word prosperous, and then shalt thou have good success. Have not I commanded thee?

Since also the moral precepts of this Law have been confirmed, explained, and spiritualized by that Divine Prophet, the Lord of all the Prophets, Whom God raised up | according to His promise, and Who came from Heaven for this purpose; and since it is written, every soul which will not hear that Prophet shall be destroyed from among

^{*} Exod. xviii. 21.

[†] Deut. xvii. 18, 19.

^{||} Deut. xviii. 15-19.

^{+ 2} Sam. xxiii. 3.

[§] Josh. i. 8, 9.

the people,* shall we not then conclude that a diligent study of both Testaments and an implicit obedience to God's will as revealed in them is the paramount and indispensable duty of all who bear rule in a Christian land, and that without such study and obedience they cannot be fit to govern?

Again; one of the most important parts of Righteousness is prayer. Without prayer no one can hope for true wisdom, and without wisdom no one is qualified to rule. Consider the example of the wise monarch by whom the Holy Spirit spake the words of our text. One of the first acts of King Solomon, on his accession to the throne, was to go up to Gibeon, the great high place before the temple was built, and there to pray God for an understanding heart to judge the people. God said, in answer to his prayer, Lo, I have given thee a wise and understanding heart, so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall arise any like thee. The spirit of wisdom we know from this example, and from positive assertions of holy writ, is given to fervent prayer, I and prayer is an act of righteousness. Righteousness, therefore, is a cause of wisdom, and qualifies to rule; and thus, in the words of Solomon himself. the throne is established by Righteousnesss, and, Righteousness exalteth a nation.

^{*} Acts, iii. 23, vii. 37.

^{† 1} Kings, iii. 4-13; 2 Chron. i. 3-12.

[†] Prov. ii. 3-5; James, i. 5. § Prov. xvi. 12.

On the other hand, let us now suppose the case of a Ruler who is not actuated by this spirit of righteousness. Let us imagine one who is so illinstructed in the duties of his high office, that he does not consider himself as God's minister for good* to those committed to his care, nor regard himself as their fellow-subject under Christ. What will be his career? Such a Ruler as this may perhaps be just, so far as human laws oblige him to be. may endeavour to promote the temporal welfare of his people. He may encourage the arts of peace. Commerce and manufactures may perhaps flourish under his rule. Cities may be built and beautified. New avenues of communication from place to place may be opened. The limits of the empire may be extended. That is, he may labour, and labour successfully, for the accessories of national exaltation, which are no doubt highly to be prized in their due degree, and as subordinate and subsidiary to the Divine Honour; but all the while the real essence of national greatness will have been wasting away. He will have been treating men as no better than machines: he will never once have looked upon them in their true, their most important relation, that which they bear to his own Almighty Sovereign and theirs, the Supreme Governor of the World-Jesus Christ. The work of Government, therefore, in his hands, instead of being a divine function, I had almost

^{*} Rom. xiii. 4--6.

said a holy priesthood, for God's glory and the welfare of His people, will have been only a low, sordid, material, mercenary trade. He will have been a mere Hophni* among rulers, thinking of what can be drawn up by his own flesh-hook, without regard to God's service. He will have been an Ahithophel, + priding himself on his own counsel; a Nebuchadnezzar, vaunting himself of his own Babylon; ‡ a Herod Agrippa, § not giving God the glory of his eloquence, but loving to be applauded by men with idolatrous adulation. course as this may, indeed, be the temporary exaltation of the Ruler; but assuredly it will be his final degradation, and that of the people entrusted to his care.

For, my brethren, the fact, the indubitable fact, is, however it may be disregarded by men,—and alas! it is disregarded by a large number of mankind; yet we ought not to judge of civil affairs according to the opinions of men on earth, but according to the declarations of God, looking down upon us from His throne in heaven—and the fact, I repeat, is, that Christ is King of the Earth, and that all rulers and men are His subjects. The Lord is high and to be feared, He is the great King upon all the earth; Heaven is His throne, and Earth is His footstool. || Such is His might and majesty

^{* 1} Sam. ii. 16, 17.

^{+ 2} Sam. xvii. 23.

[†] Daniel, iv. 30.

[§] Acts, xii. 21.

^{||} Psalm xlvii. 2. Isa. lxvi. 1. Acts, vii. 49. Isa. xl. 15.

that Behold to Him the nations are but as a drop in the bucket, and as the small dust of the balance; behold He taketh up the isles as a very little thing. Christ must reign (says St. Paul *) till He hath put all His enemies under His feet; all Kings + must fall down before Him, all Nations must do Him service. The Kingdom that will not serve Him (says God) # shall perish. To Righteousness alone are His blessings promised; Godliness hath the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come, and Righteousness, and Righteousness alone. exalteth a nation: and without Righteousness a State must expect punishment from him. State can prosper which is not blessed by Him, to Whom all power is given in heaven and earth; and those (He says) who honour Me I will honour, and those who despise Me shall be lightly esteemed. No nation therefore can look for true happiness which does not honour Christ by the audible homage of its national voice, and worship Him with the visible adoration of its legislative acts.

Many are the ways in which He chastises guilty nations which dishonour and disobey Him. Pestilence, Famine, War are His ministers, standing like angels about His throne, ever ready to go forth on missions into the world to avenge the offences of men and states against His offended Majesty.

^{* 1} Cor. xv. 25.

[†] Psalm lxxii. 11.

[†] Isa. lx. 12.

^{§ 1} Tim. iv. 8.

^{| 18}am. ii. 30.

But one agent of retribution never rests—Discord. When Religion is neglected by Rulers there is and ever will be a turbulent spirit in the people. When Governors do not act as servants of Christ their subjects lose all thought of their own solemn reponsibilities. They regard society as a mere human contrivance, they consider Rulers as only ministers of man, and laws as nothing better than cunning devices of the strong to oppress the weak.

Let us imagine ourselves, my brethren, to be reduced to this most miserable condition. us, I say, suppose that such were the notions now current among us on these most important subjects. Where then, let me ask, would be our reverence and affection for the office and persons of our Rulers? Where our attachment to the institutions of our country? Where our obedience to her laws? The external force of civil authority, and the fear of temporal punishment, might still have some influence to restrain men from open violations of the law. But, supposing the foundations of righteousness to be overthrown, then, let me inquire, what would become of men's belief in future rewards and punishments, and where would be the sanctity of oaths in Courts of Justice—which belief and sanctity are the two strongest bulwarks of public peace-and what then would be able to exercise any control over the mainspring of men's actions—their hearts?

What would restrain them from seditious thoughts and factious words, nay, and from rebellious acts. if they could be done with impunity? What from secret plots and dark conspiracies? Nothing. Penal enactments and a vigilant and vigorous police may, perhaps, secure peace in broad daylight in public streets; but they thus often delude men by making them imagine that there is the spirit of peace in the national heart while there is no peace. They can indeed dress up, as it were, the outside of the mountain, and can make it look fair and flourishing with the olives of peace and the vines of plenty, but they cannot touch the volcano below, which is smouldering in its dark crater, and ready to burst forth in a flood of fire. No; they cannot repress turbulence in the national mind, or quell it in the secret haunts of clandestine cabals. It is Religion—it is Religion alone—which can do this. It is the dread of Judgment and of Hell which can give ubiquity to It is the Gospel—it is the Gospel alone which can hallow a State, and consecrate a Throne, and shield the Sovereign seated upon it. It is the knowledge and fear of Christ, the Great Lord of the World, and our Everlasting Judge—it is the hope of an imperishable reward for holy obedience from His hands, which alone can render us as loval in our own homes, as we may appear to be in a Court of Justice, or in a Christian Church.

If therefore the true welfare of a nation de-

pends, as surely it does depend, on the mutual affection of the governors and the governed, if it consists in loyalty to the Throne, and in reverence for Law, and in attachment to our National Institutions; if it is derived from a spirit of unity and love, of peace and contentment, of justice and honesty, of diligence and sobriety pervading all classes of the community, then we must all confess that Righteousness exalteth a Nation: for it is Righteousness alone which can produce these blessed results.

Yes, and if Righteousness animated the whole national heart, we should need no other protection; we should realise the poetical description of the golden age of the world, in which men are represented as just without laws, and holy from the love of virtue.

To conclude. No nation of the world has yet proved as fully as might be shown by a practical example, that *Righteousness exalteth a Nation*; and the present condition of States, especially in Europe, where nations in their public character, instead of strengthening their religious foundations, seem to be apostatizing from Christianity, fills the mind with despondency and dismay with respect to the future.

Would to Heaven then that our own beloved Country, which seems to have been so highly privileged and favoured, as to have been specially selected and called by Almighty God to be a faithful witness to Christ at home, and a zealous Missionary of the Gospel to the World, would awake at length from her slumber to a due sense of the high and holy dignity of her great commission! and, in the sight of God and men, would act in the firm belief, that Righteousness exalteth a nation!

It was said by the wisest of the ancient heathens* that the World would not be happy till Kings were Philosophers and Philosophers were Kings; but we would rather say, that a Nation cannot be truly exalted, till rulers and the ruled are good Christians. Hence then it is necessary, that all who have power among us should remember that Christ is King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and that He is Head over all things to His Church,+ which is His body; and that all the Christians of this land, high and low, rich and poor, are fellowmembers, one with another, in His body; that those in authority in our State bear a commission from Christ Himself to promote the welfare of His body, and that they will be called to a strict account hereafter at His judgment seat, whether they have used their power for the glory of Him Who has entrusted them with it. ‡ Who (says He) is that faithful and wise servant whom His Lord hath made ruler over His household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant

^{*} Plato, Rep. V. 473, C.

[†] Eph. i. 22, 23; Col. i. 18; and Rev. xvii. 14, xix. 16.

[†] Matth. xxiv. 45, 46.

whom his Lord, when He cometh, shall find so doing.

Such a servant as this, my brethren, will assuredly reject the unchristian tenet of modern times, that Religion is no concern of Rulers, and that they exist only to take care that men are well fed and clothed; as if the Civil Magistrate had no higher duties to perform than those of a feeder of horses and hounds, and as if men had no souls, and there were no judgment to come! Rather he will prove by his acts that he believes Religion to be the first care appertaining to public rule, and that he knows Piety to be the best Policy, and that Righteousness exalteth a Nation.

Would to God also, my brethren, that we who are subjects, would all bear in mind that our Rulers are Christ's deputies; that he who resisteth them in any lawful command resisteth the ordinance of God; * that we are not to indulge in rash censures upon them, but to remember the command of God, † Thou shalt not speak evil of the Ruler of thy people; and of His holy Apostle, The Lord will punish those who despise government and speak evil of dignities! ‡ Would that we all duly reflected that they are to be reverenced and loved by us for conscience' sake; that, above all, § they are to be remembered by us in our daily prayers; and that we are to beg God's richest blessings, tem-

^{*} Rom. xiii. 1, 2.

⁺ Exod. xxii. 28; Acts, xxiii. 5.

^{1 2} Pet. ii. 10.

^{§ 1} Tim. ii. 1.

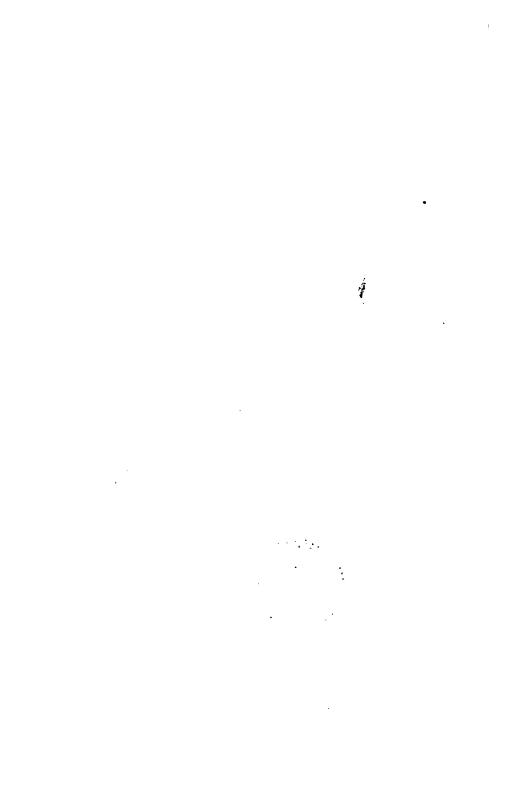
poral and eternal, upon all true nursing fathers and nursing mothers of Christ's Church; and that we are all fellow-subjects and fellow-members with them under Christ, the great King of the Earth, and Universal Head of the Church, and are bound to labour with them by word and deed in all their endeavours for the diffusion of His truth, and for the promotion of His glory.

May God of His infinite mercy so order the wills and affections of all from the highest to the lowest among us, that these things may be indeed so! Then indeed England will enjoy the high honour and glorious privilege of proving to the world by her example that Righteousness exalteth a Nation; then will her Peace be as a river, and her Righteousness as the waves of the sea!*

Grant, O Lord, we beseech Thee, that the course of this world may be so peaceably ordered by Thy governance that Thy Church may joyfully serve Thee in all godly quietness, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—Amen.

* Isa. xlix. 23.

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NATIONAL WARNINGS

ON

NATIONAL EDUCATION.

A Sermon,

PREACHED IN AID OF THE PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS,

ΑT

THE PARISH CHURCH OF SOUTH HACKNEY,
ON SUNDAY, THE 12TH OF NOVEMBER, 1848.

BY THE REV.

CHR. WORDSWORTH, D.D.

CANON OF WESTMINSTER.



LONDON:

RIVINGTONS, PALL MALL, AND WATERLOO PLACE.

HACKNEY:

G. A. SOUTHAN, MARE STREET.

MDCCCXLVIII.

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December 1, 1848.

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SERMON.

- "Where shall wisdom be found, and where is the place of understanding?"
- "Behold, the fear of the Lord, THAT is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding."—Job xxviii. 12, 28.

We read, in the seventeenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, that St. Paul, in the performance of his apostolical duties, which he had now been discharging for about fifteen years, came to Athens, the most learned city of Greece. He there entered into conversation with the Philosophers of the two Schools, which were then the most flourishing in the Gentile world, the Stoic and the Epicurean; and, being charged with promulgating strange doctrines, he was brought before the Court of the Areopagus, the highest Tribunal of Athens, which took cognizance of capital offences, especially in matters of Religion.

This Tribunal sat, not as our Courts of Justice do, within closed walls, but in the open air, on a low rocky hill in the centre of Athens; and on this spot the Apostle was placed, and was there called upon to vindicate himself.

The position in which St. Paul then stood, was a very striking one. Here was a Christian Apostle, from Tarsus, a city regarded as little better than barbarous by the polished Athenian, standing alone before the most dignified auditory in the most enlightened city of the earth. He had before him the most magnificent creations of human skill. As he stood with his face northward, he saw, on his right hand, towering on its proud Acropolis, the severe and stately Parthenon, the temple of the Goddess of Wisdom, adorned with the noblest works of the most celebrated sculptors in the world: near it was the bronze colossus of the same Deity, armed with helmet, spear, and shield, the champion of Athens.

Behind him was the open hill on which the greatest Orators of the world had held five thousand persons at once in mute Immediately below him was the beautiful circle of the Agora, planted with wide-spreading plane-trees, and adorned with exquisite statues, marble, bronze, and gilded; decorated with frescoed Porticoes, and noble Halls and Temples, productions of Athenian genius, and monuments of Athenian glory. Here were the seminaries of sages; there, he who had been pronounced by an Oracle the wisest of men, Socrates, had dwelt; beyond, near that olive grove, Plato had taught; on the other side of the city, was the school of him who had trained the conqueror of the world. Wherever the Apostle, standing on Mars' Hill, turned his eyes, he contemplated objects which were associated, in the minds of his hearers, with the proudest triumphs of human knowledge, and intellectual power.

And what then were the thoughts—what was the language of St. Paul ?—He was not dazzled by this blaze of splendour. He knew well, that nothing would be so acceptable to his audience as eulogies of their national intelligence; and he stood arraigned and alone before them. And yet, he would not idolize the Genius, nor the Philosophy and Eloquence of Athens. No. The accused Apostle became an accuser. He charged the wise Athenians with folly. enlightend city, he said, was full of darkness. Gods it had many, but it had not GoD; the gods which it knew were false;—the true God, it knew Him not. Him, said the Apostle, the Unknown God, declare I unto you; He is your Creator, and your Lord. All your past history, on which you dwell with so much pride and fondness, was a time of ignorance an age of gloom. The times of this ignorance, he says, God winked at; but now He commandeth all men, everywhere, to repent; because, He hath appointed a day, in which He will judge the world by that Man whom He hath ordained, JESUS CHRIST ".

Yes, be it known to you all, you Athenians, you who have charged me with impiety, you are strangers to God; you

Acts xvii. 30, 31.

Areopagites, who sit here to judge me, you all will be judged by Him Whom I preach to you, Jesus Christ.

Such was St. Paul's language to the Athenians; and thus he pronounced a divinely-inspired verdict concerning the question of the Patriarch, in the text—Where shall Wisdom be found, and where is the place of Understanding?

Not among the wise of this world—not in the schools of secular philosophy—not amid the ingenious creations of art and man's device; for, as St. Paul expressly says, the World by Wisdom knew not God*; but, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is Wisdom, and to depart from Evil is Understanding.

Let us now change the scene from ancient times to our own; and let us examine whether the lapse of near twenty centuries has in any degree impaired the truth of the assertion, Behold, the fear of God, that is Wisdom, and to depart from evil is Understanding.

When Thy judgments are in the earth, says the Prophet to Almighty God, then the inhabitants of the world shall learn righteousness. And another Prophet exclaims, the Lord's voice crieth in the city, and the man of wisdom shall see Thy name. Hear ye the rod, and Who hath appointed it.

God's judgments are now in the world; the rod has spoken to us all: and it is our duty to study the Book of God's *Providence*, no less than that of His *Word*, and to learn wisdom from both. Let us therefore inquire what He now teaches us on this important question—*Where shall Wisdom be found*, and where is the place of Understanding?

If we had been asked, a short time since, to name a City in our own age which presented a striking resemblance to the intellectual capital of ancient Greece, we should, I think, have had little difficulty in replying to that question. The magnificent splendour of its buildings, the natural quickness of the faculties of its people, and the lively buoyancy of their spirits, and we may add, even the genial softness of its climate, and the beautiful transparency of its atmosphere, would have sufficed to mark out one City of continental Europe as bearing a remarkable similitude to the Athenian capital. And if we

proceed further with the parallel, we perceive still more striking features of resemblance.

I do not suppose that any Nation has ever existed on the surface of the earth, in which what is usually called popular intelligence has been more generally diffused than in that Country, which is separated from our own by a narrow interval of waters. Let any one carefully examine the ingenious processes by which an elaborate system of NATIONAL INSTRUCTION was organized in that Country, about forty years ago, and made coextensive with its entire territory, while it was centralized, in one secular focus, in the Capital—let him trace, one by one, the legislative measures which were adopted, at intervals, since that period, especially fifteen

- See them detailed in the Work of M. De Riancey, Histoire de l'Instruction publique. Paris. 2 tom. 1844. Tome ii. pp. 91-477.
- In the celebrated Law sur l'Instruction Primaire, bearing the following date and signatures:—
 - "Fait à Paris, le 28 jour du mois de Juin 1833. Louis Philippe;
 - " Par le Roi, le Ministre Secrétaire d'Etat au Departement
 - " de l'Instruction Publique.

Fifteen years have passed away, during which this Law has been in full operation; and what was the condition of Paris on its fifteenth anniversary?

On the 28th of June 1848, the Monarch and Minister who had affixed their signatures to this Act, were exiles in England. Paris had just been the scene of a four days' massacre; viz. on the 23rd, 24th, 25th, and 26th of June: the Archbishop of Paris was lying a corpse, killed in a tumult; 6,500 insurgents were in the public prisons; Paris was in a state of siege; and on the 23th June, General Cavaignac was named Chef Du Pouvoir.

The following is a brief description of the events of the four days; from the "Constitutionnel," a liberal Journal:—

"Nous ne pouvons connaître encore toute l'étendue de nos pertes, et nous n'avons pas le courage de chercher à les évaluer : elles sont affreuses. On ne trouverait dans les annales d'aucune nation un exemple d'une lutte aussi acharnée et aussi meurtrière. Des actes d'une férocité incroyable ont été accomplis par ces malheureux, dont beaucoup avaient été égarés, mais dont un certain nombre pourtant semblent avoir obéi à des passions sauvages, et s'être livrés à un véritable dévergondage de barbarie.

"Nous avons déjà dit, et nous devons répéter que la lutte qui vient de finir n'a ressemblé en rien aux insurrections qui ont plusieurs fois ensanglanté Paris. C'était alors la lutte de deux systèmes politiques, c'était une guerre déclarée par une minorité au gouvernement en possession du pouvoir; le combat était acharné, mais il se soutenait presque toujours

years ago, to give greater vigour and consolidation to that Popular System—let him count the vast sums of public money which have been expended by that Nation on this gigantic plan of Instruction, and he will confess, that similar efforts have scarcely ever before been made by any Nation for the dissemination of human Knowledge, and for training an entire people with all the aids and appliances of secular philosophy.

Truly there, as the Prophet has predicted of the latter days—Many have run to and fro, and Knowledge has been increased, and, in the words of the Wise Man, They have sought out many inventions.

We are now led to inquire, What results have been produced by this vast, complex, and costly machinery of National Instruction? Has the diffusion of Knowledge exercised a purifying influence on the national heart? It has imparted power—has it inspired love? It has sharpened the intellect but has it disciplined the affections? It has stimulated the faculties—has it calmed the passions? It has increased greatly the ability to do evil—has it augmented the disposition to do good? It has made men resent, with feverish irritability, any imputations of ignorance—but has it made them shudder at the thought of committing crime? Has it taught them to fear the Lord and the King ? to be subject to Principalities and Powers d, which are the ordinance of God ? Has it deterred them from despising Government? and from Sedition, Insurrection, and Rebellion, which are as the sin of Witchcraft 6? Has it made them recoil from shedding the

loyalement, sans trahison ni cruauté, et un meurtre inutile soulevait plus l'opinion publique et provoquait une plus grande réprobation que l'initiative d'un coup de main.

"Cette fois le drapeau rouge a été déployé, l'émeute s'est battue aux cris de—Vive la Republique sociale! et comme commentaire de ce cri de ralliement, elle a écrit sur plusieurs de ses drapeaux les mots de : "Pillage et le viol." La postérité refusera de croire les supplices infligés à des prisonniers par des concitoyens, dans un siècle comme le nôtre et dans la capitale du pays qui se vante d'être à la tête de la civilisation. A juger par ce qu'a fait l'émeute vaincue, on frémit de penser au sort qui était réservé à Paris si cette entreprise sacrilége avait pu réussir."

Daniel xii. 4.

b Eccles. vii. 29.

c Proverbs xxiv. 21,

d Titus iii. 1, 2.

[•] Romans xiii. 1, 2.

^{&#}x27; 2 Peter ii. 10.

^{5 1} Samuel xv. 23.

blood like water of their own fellow citizens? and from tearing the vitals of their Country, with the parricidal and sacrilegious ravages of civil war *?

In this Sacred Place we are bound to throw a veil over the scenes of carnage, confusion, and anarchy, and all their miserable consequences—distrust and distress—the paralyzation of trade, and the prostration of industry—which supply the answer to these necessary though painful questions. But the House

- a The author, in giving utterance to the above sentiments, will not be charged with national prejudice; for he is only re-echoing, and that faintly, the language of some of the most eminent persons in France. The following is from a letter of a French Clergyman, a Member of the National Assembly of France, the Abbé Le Blanc; written a few days after the massacre of June last:—
- "Les quatre épouvantables journées de Juin viennent de finir à peine; Paris est dans le deuil. Les âmes sont encore vibrantes des émotions les plus douloureuses."

The Abbé then speaks of the Instruction given to those concerned in these horrible outrages.

- "La vraie Education n'a-t-elle pas manqué à ce peuple, cette fraction du peuple que nous avons eue en tête, il y a quelques jours? N'aurons-nous que des coups des fusil et des malédictions pour ces hommes égarés, ne saurons-nous que nous indigner d'une indignation stérile au terrible souvenir de ces atrocités dignes des Anthropophages qui ont souillé la capitale du monde civilisé?
- "Indignons-nous, répétons que ces hommes sont des monstres, frémissons à la pensée que nous n'avons eu peut-être encore affaire qu'à l'avantgarde d'une armée de Cannibales.
- "Mais après l'explosion de sa colère, que la société s'examine et s'interroge devant Dieu, qu'elle se juge et que, descendant aux causes, elle ose se dire: Je ne suis nullement solidaire de ces crimes.
- "Le mal est profond; l'âme du peuple, desséchée par une Education sans onction et sans amour, a besoin d'être refaite, repétrie, pour ainsi dire: Nous savons tous ce que c'est que l'Instruction primaire en France; elle peut distribuer quelques notions superficielles, donner un premier développement à l'esprit; mais a-t-elle un mot pour le cœur? Elle saisit l'enfant par la memoire; elle n'a aucune prise sur lui par le cœur, et cependant le cœur est la source de la vie morale: de corde procedit vita. L'Instruction telle que nous la donnons à des mots sonores sur les devoirs dont elle ne sait pas la raison, des mots plus sonores sur les droits qu'il faut apprendre à chacun à respecter dans tous, mais dont il ne faut pas surexciter les sentiment personnel en des âmes qui ne savent pas se posséder elles-mêmes. Elle pousse, cette Instruction, à la recherche du bien-être; la vie, c'est, d'après elle, une

of God is, or ought to be, a School of Wisdom: and we should be very untrue to Him and ourselves, if we were to

marche incessante vers le bonheur, et à des âmes travaillées prématurément par d'ambitieuses pensées, elle ne laisse aucune force contre le malheur.

- "Des hommes—tels que les sait cet Enseignement—livrés à toute l'énergie de leur passions, et qui pour la plupart se trouveront sace à sace avec le malheur bien plus qu'avec la sélicité, ne seront-ils pas toujours une menace contre la société? Et si des doctrines perverses, des prédications anti-sociales incessamment les excitent; si des agitateurs ambitieux leur apprennent à se compter, enrôlent toutes ces passions et toutes ces colères, pouvons-nous éviter d'effroyables catastrophes?
- "La vie est une peine bien plutôt qu'une jouissance. Il faut la sanctifier par l'accomplissement du devoir bien plus que la distraire par le plaisir. Qu'elle soit le combat incessant du devoir contre la passion, de l'esprit de dévoûment contre l'égoïsme; le seul bonheur de cette vie mortelle, c'est la résignation, c'est à dire le mal souffert dans l'attente de la félicité d'une autre vie.

"Voila ce que le Christianisme enseigne à l'humanité dépuis des siècles. Le salut de la société est dans l'intelligence et la pratique de cet enseignement. M. Thiers, dans une lettre qui a fait du bruit, n'indiquait-il pas lui-même dernièrement ce grand et unique remède?"

Such is the description given by a French Representative of the horrors which have been recently perpetrated in France, and such is his opinion of their cause.

Let England profit by the warning; lest she also become the victim of similar outrages and calamities; and lest her Legislators and Clergy should rue the evil—when it is too late.

The following is from a Charge, published at the same time, by the Archbishop of Arras: -

"Ne nous y trompons point, nos très chers frères, ce sont nos crimes, nos désordres, et la répudiation de toute croyance; ce sont les fruits funestes de cette Education, sans principes de morale, sans foi aucune, à laquelle on assujettissait notre trop infortunée jeunesse; ce sont toutes les Utopies de déraison, tous les plans de régénération sociale, invention du délire, suscités par le désir de briser, de détruire, s'il eût été possible, la religion de nos pères, pour ne nous faire appliquer désormais qu'à la pensée désastreuse et désolante du néant!"

The letter of M. Thiers, referred to by M. Le Blanc, is as follows:-

Lettre de M. Thiers à M. M., de M., Ancien Député.

Mon Cher M. Paris, le 2 Mai 1848.

"Voici mon avis sur vos questions fort imposantes du moment présent.

"Vous connaissez l'entêtement ordinaire de mes opinions, politiques, so-

close our eyes to the momentous lessons which are taught us by those appalling spectacles to which I have referred.

Where shall Wisdom be found, and where is the place of Understanding?

A tree is known by his fruit . True Wisdom, as the

ciales, économiques; vous savez mon peu de goût pour la députation; vous êtes donc bien convaincu que je ne ferais pas le sacrifice d'une seule de mes façons de penser à la multitude électorale. Mais je suis quelquefois dépité en voyant les sottes opinions que me prêtent plusieurs de vos amis à l'égard du Clergé; il me semble, qu'après avoir lu ce que j'ai écrit sur le Concordat, ils devraient être un peu plus éclairés sur mes sentiments vrais.

- "En tout cas, la Revolution du 24 Février aurait changé beaucoup de choses à ce sujet, et ne permettrait pas un doute, si on en avait un seul. J'ai toujours cru, qu'il fallait une religion positive, un culte, un Clergé, et qu'en ce genre, ce qu'il y avait de plus ancien, était ce qu'il y avait de meilleur, comme c'était ce qu'il y avait de plus respectable. Aujourd'hui, que toutes les idées sociales sont perverties, et qu'on va nous donner dans chaque village un Instituteur, qui sera un Phalanstérien, je regarde le Curé comme une indispensable rectification des idées du peuple : il lui enseignera au moins, au nom du Christ, que la douleur est nécessaire dans tous les états, qu'elle est la condition de la vie, et que, quand les pauvres ont la fièvre, ce ne sont pas les richesses qui la leur envoient.
- "Sans salaire, il n'y a pas de Clergé. Beaucoup de Catholiques se trompent à cet égard, et s'imaginent, qu'en renoncant au salaire, ils seront affranchis de l'Etat; ils ne seront affranchis que de la peine de toucher leur argent; mais voilà tout. Le joug sera de fer pour eux, comme pour nous tous, et ils mourront de besoin dans leur servitude aggravée.
- "Qu'on soit bien convaincu que, dans les neuf dixièmes de la France, on laisserait mourir de faim les prêtres. En Vendée peut-être on les nourrirait; de grands propriétaires même pourront former une caisse où il y aura quelques millions (ce dont je doute), et Dieu sait ce qu'on fera de ces millions. Je ne cesse, mon cher M., de vous le dire depuis deux mois: Avec ce système, nous ferions rétrograder la France jusqu'à l'Irlande.
- "Quant à la liberté d'enseignement, je suis changé! Je le suis, non par une révolution dans mes convictions, mais par une révolution dans l'état social. Quand l'Université représentait la bonne et sage bourgeoisie Française, enseignait nos enfants suivant les méthodes de Rollin, donnait la préférence aux saines et vieilles études classiques sur les études physiques, et toutes matérielles des prôneurs de l'enseignement professionnel, Oh! alors, je lui voulais sacrificer les libertés de l'enseignement. Aujourd'hui, je ne suis plus là, et pourquoi? Parce que rien n'est où il était. L'Université, tombant aux mains des Phalanstériens, prétend enseigner à nos anfants un peu de mathématiques, de physique, de sciences naturelles et

Apostle says, is first pure, then peaceable; full of mercy and good fruits: whereas if men have bitter strife in their hearts, their Wisdom, says he, is earthly, sensual, devilish.

From those recent events then, to which we have just alluded, we are obliged to conclude, that true Wisdom is not to be found in the teaching of human Knowledge and secular Philosophy.

Let it not be imagined, however, that while we so speak we are disparaging human intellect, or depreciating literary and scientific attainments. Heaven forbid! They are God's gifts: they are among his most precious boons: they are of inestimable value when applied to the elucidation of His truth, and to the manifestation of His glory. It is specially noted in Holy Scripture concerning the great JewishLawgiver, that he was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. Therefore human learning and science are ornaments in God's sight.

But observe, of the same Lawgiver it is also written, The man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth. Here is the portrait drawn by God himself, of the true Philosopher: his Wisdom is beautified by humility. God grant that all who have received the endowments of genius and learning from Him, may use them as sacred trusts, of which they will be required to give a strict ac-

beaucoup de démagogie; je ne vois de salut, s'il y en a, que dans la liberté d'enseignement. Je ne dis pas qu'elle doive être absolue et sans aucune garantie pour l'autorité publique; car enfin, s'il y avait un enseignement *Carnot*, et au-delà un enseignement *Blanqui*, je voudrais bien pouvoir empêcher au moins le dernier! Mais, en tout cas, je répète, que l'enseignement du Clergé, que je n'aimais point, pour beaucoup de raisons, me semble maintenant meilleur que celui qui nous est préparé.

"Telle est ma façon de penser sur tout cela. Je suis tout ce que j'étais; mais je ne porte mes haines et ma chaleur de résistance que là où est aujourd'hui l'ennemi. Cet ennemi, c'est la démagogie, et je ne lui livrerai pas le dernier débris de l'ordre social, c'est-à-dire, l'établissement Catholique.

"S'il fallait livrer ceci à l'impression, je le raisonnerais plus fortement et avec plus de convenance de langage; mais on peut le communiquer à ses amis sans indiscrétion; je n'en désavouerai rien que l'impression, car j'aime à mieux faire ma toilette pour paraître en public.

(Signé) "Thiers."

James iii. 14-17. b Acts vii. 2

b Acts vii. 22. Numbers xii. 3.

count hereafter, and which, when consecrated to His service, and illuminated by His grace, will become a radiant halo around their heads, and crown them with unfading glory in this world, and in that which is to come!

But, to return.—We are now speaking of human knowledge, distinguished from, and independent of, Divine Wisdom. This (it is notorious) was the object contemplated by the system of Popular Instruction, to which we have now referred. This was its aim and end. To nerve and invigorate the faculties by an athletic and gladiatorial discipline; to give them new powers, by familiarizing the mind with physical phænomena; to impart to them energy, suppleness, elasticity, versatility, and dexterity, by exercising them in the various processes of abstract and applied Science,—this, I say, was its aim: a noble enterprise, had it been sanctified by Religion, elevated by Faith, enlightened by Grace, and chastened by the Fear of God!

But, alas! these hallowing influences were wanting. The power was given, but the spirit to guide and control that power was denied. How dangerous, therefore, was the gift! It was a sword without a scabbard, to be wielded by men who might have been Angels; but who, when agitated by fierce passions, would infallibly become Fiends.

We must examine the facts of the case a little more closely, and then we shall be in a condition to derive more wisdom from this contemplation.

First, then, we here observe, the most striking fundamental defect in this system of popular instruction—It was not based on the Word of God.

Unhappily for the country of which I am now speaking, those who ought to have been most active in the pious and necessary work of promulgating the revealed will of God, have not shewn themselves zealous for the diffusion of the Holy Scriptures. The truth must be spoken, however lamentable it be; the Clergy of the Church of Rome have not encouraged, and do not encourage, the dissemination of the Holy Scriptures. Would to Heaven we could say they do not discourage it! By the divine blessing, the invention of Printing has now been in the world four centuries—a dispensation assuredly of God's Providence for the propagation of His Truth. And yet, to

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this very hour, not one single copy of the Holy Scriptures, in their original tongues, has been printed in the city of Rome, which claims to be the Mother and Mistress of all Churches. This is a remarkable fact. We pass on. We know, from our blessed Lord Himself, that the errors of men arise from ignorance of God's will, as declared in the Scriptures. err, He says, not knowing the Scriptures. And the divine Prophet refers all men to the Law and to the Testimony, as the unerring standard of truth. If they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them. Thy Law, says the Psalmist, is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my paths c. And the Scriptures, says St. Stephen, are the lively Oracles of God d: and if any man speak, says St. Peter, let him speak as the Oracles of God . And the Scriptures, again says St. Paul, are the things which are able (τὰ δυτάμετα) to make men wise unto salvation f. And that they are to be made the groundwork of Education is obvious from these and other similar passages of Holy Writ: and especially from the satisfaction which St. Paul expresses, that his son in the faith, Timothy, had known the Holy Scriptures from a child f.

Assuredly, then, in reply to the question of the Patriarch, Where shall Wisdom be found, and where is the place of understanding? we must answer—in the Word of God: Here is Wisdom—here is Understanding. And in systems of Education which are not founded on the Word of God, there may be Knowledge, but there cannot be Wisdom: they are radically defective, and their results must be deplorable.

Here, my beloved brethren, we cannot refrain from lifting up our hearts and voices in grateful adoration of the merciful goodness of Almighty God, towards us of this Church and Nation, in bestowing upon us the admirable Version which we possess of His Holy Word, in our vernacular tongue, and in providing that it be read publicly in our Churches, taught in our Schools and Families, and disseminated throughout our Land. Would that our own use of it equalled our means of using it! For these benefits we are bound to bless God, as men, citizens, and Christians. For let us be assured, that the best Instructor in loyalty as well as in piety—the best preservative of our

Matthew xxii. 29. Bajah viji. 20. Psalms cxix. 105.

social happiness and domestic peace, as well as the surest standard of our Christian Faith; the best Charter of our Civil Rights and Liberties, as well as the safest Warrant of our Christian Hopes, is the Bible. We owe our present tranquillity to that Blessed Book. God be thanked for it!

Where shall Wisdom be found, and where is the place of Understanding? In the Word of God. But this is not all: it is necessary, as we have seen, to be instructed in God's Word, in order to learn Wisdom; but this instruction is not enough. There must be something more. Suppose you examine a number of children; you may find many among them who are very quick in answering your questions concerning Scripture-History, Geography, and Chronology: and perhaps they will repeat to you, very aptly and accurately, the scripture texts which you may require for the proof or illustration of the various doctrines of Christianity. And this is all very well, and very satisfactory, as far as it goes. But this proficiency by no means proves that the Gospel has struck deep root in their hearts. This exhibition may be, after all, only the exuberance and efflorescence of knowledge, which, like Jonah's gourd, springs up rapidly, and shows forth its luxuriant foliage, but has a worm at its root, and will soon wither and die. No: in order that there be true religious knowledge, there must be religious habits. Our blessed Lord Himself teaches that the root of piety is practice. If, says He, any man will do God's will, he shall know of the doctrine'. If ye continue in My word, ye shall know the truthb. He that keepeth My commandments, he it is that loveth me: and I will love him, and manifest Myself to him'. Christ not only says, he that hath ears to hear, let him hear; but He says also, take heed how ye heard. He that heareth and doeth not, buildeth his house upon the sand. We must add to our faith virtue. Obedience is the key to Scripture. God revealeth mysteries to the meek, and dwelleth with the man of an humble and contrite spirit. As the Wise Man says-He that keepeth the law of the Lord getteth the understanding thereof; and the perfection of the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom h.

Here, then, you will perceive, is a second most important

[•] John vii. 17. • John viii. 31, 32. • John xiv. 21.

d Luke viii, 18. Matthew vii, 26. 2 Peter i. 5.

⁵ Isaiah lvii. 15. b Ecclus, xxi. 11.

practical lesson to all who are desirous of promoting their own growth in wisdom, and that of others, and of so preserving their beloved country from those calamities by which other nations are overwhelmed. Everything now depends, under God, not on the quantity, but on the quality of the Instruction which the rising generation among us will receive. The Word of God, and the Work of God: here is our safety. Religious knowledge, and religious habits: in their union is our strength. Keep, therefore, and do My statutes, says God to us all, for this is your wisdom in the sight of the nations, which shall say, surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.

The question now arises—How is this to be effected? Certainly not, we reply, by the will of man alone?

Here is the pernicious error of many persons, distinguished by zeal, in our own times. They seem to imagine, that, by placing the Scriptures in the hands of young persons, and by inculcating upon them moral lessons of temperance, sobriety, honesty, truth, and industry, and by endeavouring to train them by precept and example in these virtues, they can accomplish the work of Education. A most strange and fatal delusion!

The will of man, be assured, can do nothing as it ought to do, unless it be prevented, aided, and guided, by *Divine Grace*.

Moral Precepts and Examples are of little avail, unless they are commended and enforced by the persuading, enabling, and exciting influences of the Holy Spirit. The outward teaching of the Bible profits nothing, without the inward teaching of the Holy Spirit Who wrote the Bible.

The Comforter is and ever will be the best Teacher. The Comforter, who is the Holy Ghost, will teach you all things, said Christ to His Apostles. To Him the devout Christian addresses his fervent aspirations.—Open Thou mine eyes, that I may see the wondrous things of Thy law. Take the veil from my heart. In Thy light I shall see light. Enable me to see Thy will, and to do it. On the other hand, the natural man—that is, he who relies on his own reason, cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. The aid of the Spirit is indispensable, that we may

Deuteronomy iv. 6.

b Psalms exix. 18.

c Psalms xxxvi. 9.

d 1 Corinthians ii. 14.

see the things of the Spirit, and bring forth the fruits of the Spirit. Therefore, in every system of popular Instruction which would hope to communicate true wisdom, and to produce the pure and peaceable fruits of wisdom, there must be a distinct recognition of the paramount necessity of Divine Grace.

In so speaking, we are very far from giving any countenance to the notions of enthusiasts, who look for new revelations, or expect to soar to the heights of Wisdom on the wings of fanatical raptures. No: God never lends His aid, to encourage our ignorance, indolence, or presumption. The Holy Spirit is not given to supersede our labour, but to stimulate, direct, and assist it—not to destroy our Reason, but to elevate it; and it is not poured out in fitful gusts and wild torrents, but in the calm effusions of the regular means of Grace.

It has pleased God of His great goodness to us, to offer to convey Grace to our souls by certain channels, which are especially, Prayer, public and private, and the two Sacraments. By them He gives strength, and refreshment, and illumination, to our souls, in the same manner as He communicates nourishment by food to our bodies. Therefore Prayer and the Sacraments are called means of Grace. And although God could, if He so willed it, give us Grace by any other means than these, or without any means at all, yet since He has instituted these means for the express purpose of conveying Grace to us, we have no warrant whatever to expect Grace from Him, unless we use—use diligently and devoutly—these means, which He has thought fit to appoint for that purpose, with express command to us to employ the same.

Here then we have another warning.

We perceive, from what has been said, the futility, shallowness, and presumption, of those systems of Popular Instruction, which separate the work of teaching from Prayer and the Sacraments. Such Instruction as that is no better than drawing water in broken cisterns. It is of the earth, earthy. It is the system of the builders of Babel, and will end in a confusion of tongues. It is not the system of those whose minds have been enlightened by the Holy Spirit, and who labour for unity, and seek peace and ensue it. They who have received the Word, and have been baptized, continue steadfastly

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in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread (that is, in the celebration of the Eucharist), and in prayer.

This is the true picture of Christian Education.

To sum up what has now been said.—First, let us not delude ourselves, nor attempt to delude others, with the vain imagination, that it is enough for a Nation to devote large sums of public money to popular Instruction; and to stimulate the intellectual faculties of all classes of society by literary and scientific knowledge. The eye may be dazzled by specious results of mental proficiency: flattering Reports may be drawn up and circulated of the progress of Schools: a great and complex secular machinery may be organized and centralized, for the conduct of Public Instruction, as a neighbouring country has taught us by a terrible example, and yet no real permanent good may be effected; the national character may not be improved—it may not be more dignified—more humane-more Christian. On the contrary, it may have become more restless-more proud-more revolutionary-more unchristian-more anti-christian. And so National Instruction may lead to National Ruin.

Let us be sure of this, that the true greatness of a people depends, not on Popular Instruction, but on Christian Education.

Let us, indeed, yield due honour to Literature and Science: but let us not expect from them what they are not able to perform. Let us not rely on them as adequate means and sufficient instruments, for informing the judgment, controlling the will, and purifying the heart—in a word, for doing the work of the Holy Spirit of God. If we do, we shall find to our cost that we have been leaning on a broken reed—nay more, the reed will pierce our hand. Not only shall we discover that they are insufficient for these purposes, but if we have trusted to them as sufficient, they will prove very pernicious. True, they give men force, but they do not place any bridle upon it; and force unchecked by reason, and unguided by Religion, will soon break forth into fury. Too often, alas! they make men proud, presumptuous, self-willed, self-confident, self-idolizing, and restless; and so school them for sedi-

tion, and arm them for civil war. They give men Knowledge but not Wisdom; and "Knowledge," it is true, "is Power," but WISDOM alone is PEACE.

Next, let us repudiate all systems of instruction which are not based upon the Word of God. Let all our Schools be inscribed with the words of the Apostle—To the King, Eternal, Immortal, Invisible, the Only Wise God. And let us be assured, that other foundation can no man lay, but that is laid, Jesus Christ. Let us be satisfied, that His Word—His Word, not merely faithfully taught, but punctually obeyed, is the rock on which the fabric of our National Instruction must be built, if, in the hour of national peril, when the raine descend, and floods come, and the winds blow and beat violently upon it, it is not to be swept away by the hurricane, and involve us all in the ruin.

Next, let us not imagine that even the Word of God will profit us without the Grace of God. Let us never, therefore, concur with any who would divorce Instruction from the Public Offices of religion. Schools without Sacraments are wells without water; clouds and wind without rain. They are without the teaching of the Holy Spirit, the Author of Peace and Love. It is vain, nay, it is far worse than vain, to erect Schools, unless we provide that all who are brought up in them have habitual access to all the means of Grace in the regular Ministrations of Religion.

When Christ established His School for instructing the World, He said to His Apostles—Go ye; teach all Nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. This was His Charter of Incorporation. The Baptismal Covenant is the germ of Education; and Baptismal Grace is the early rain which makes the tender shoot put forth its first small leaves, which are afterwards to be watered with the fresh dews and latter rain of the Spirit, given in prayer, and in the reading of God's Word, and in the Apostolic rite of Confirmation, and in the Holy Eucharist, and in the other regular Ordinances of Religion.

Let us also bear in mind, that there never was a period in our own National History, in which this important subject required more careful and earnest attention than the present

^a 1 Timothy i. 17. b 1 Cor. iii. 11.

^c 2 Peter ii. 17. - Proverbs xxv. 14.

What we see in the world around us, proclaims to us, in the most distinct and solemn tones, that our own National Safety now depends on the character and principles of our National Education.

We ourselves have had internal warnings of the same truth: we have witnessed scenes of tumult at home—civil coercion has been necessary; and no wonder. We have neglected to raise in time the preventive voice of Religion, and have therefore been obliged to use the punitive arm of Force.

And while we thus punish others, can we flatter ourselves, that we, ourselves, have been guiltless? Or, whatever man may say, can it be imagined that in the eye of Almighty God, the actual delinquents in these outrages are the only criminals? No: we, we ourselves, I say, both the Clergy and Laity, who have supinely allowed them, and those multitudes who are misled by them, to be without sound Religious Education—we have much to answer for. In their sins we see the bitter fruits of our own neglect. We are, therefore. guilty, in a certain degree, of the very offences which we Therefore, physician, heal thyself! Let not this warning be thrown away by us. God grant that private exertions, aided by the wisdom of Parliament, may be enabled to retrieve what is lost, and to strengthen what yet remains! Then we shall not be confounded in the perilous time, and in the time of dearth we shall have enough. Then of our beloved England it will be said, thy children are taught of God, and great is the peace of thy children. And we shall enjoy the blessings of true wisdom; and they that are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars, for ever and ever.

It only remains that I say one word concerning the Schools which claim your aid to-day. They are based on Christianity, as taught in the Church of England: they instil the great principles of religion and loyalty inculcated in the Holy Scriptures and exemplified in the Book of Common Prayer: they are connected with this Parish Church—with that Parochial Font, and with that Parochial Altar. They depend for their existence on your Christian liberality. Their system has been tested by time, and blessed by God; they have long flou-

Paalm xxxvii, 19. b Isaiah liv, 13. c Daniel xii, 3.

rished, and are now commencing a second existence in a more spacious and handsome edifice—one more suited to their importance, and to their connexion with this noble Church,—I had almost said, this magnificent Minster. They therefore require additional efforts on your part. It is for you to support them in a manner adequate to their importance and their exigencies. To your bounty, therefore, let me earnestly recommend them; and may your liberality to them bring down a blessing from Heaven on you who give, as well as on them which receive, through Jesus Christ our Lord!

THE END.

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ON

TOPICS CONNECTED WITH EDUCATION AND THE CHURCH.

RIVINGTONS-PALL MALL, AND WATERLOO PLACE.

THE MORAL CONSEQUENCES OF A FALSE FAITH.

A SERMON

PREACHED IN THE

Church of S. Martin's in the fields, Or Liverpool,

ON SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 5TH, 1848.

BY THE

REV. CECIL WRAY, M.A.

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THE MEMBERS OF S. MARTIN'S CONGREGATION WHO BEQUESTED ITS PUBLICATION,

AND ESPECIALLY TO

RICHARD PALMER, Esq., $\left. \text{Esq., and} \right\}$ Sometime Churchwardens,

ALFRED RADCLIFFE, Esq., PRESENT CHURCHWARDEN,

IN GRATBFUL ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THAT SYMPATHY AND AID OF WHICH THE CLERGY STAND SO MUCH IN NEED AT THE RANDS OF THEIR

LAY BRETHREN, AND WHICH HAS BEEN SO FREELY AND

UNIFORMLY ACCORDED TO THE AUTHOR,

This Bermon,

WRITTEN IN THE ORDINARY COURSE OF MINISTERIAL DUTIES, AND LITTLE
DESERVING OF PUBLIC NOTICE,

IS DEDICATED,

WITH EVERY SENTIMENT OF AFFECTIONATE REGARD, BY THEIR FRIEND AND SERVANT IN CHRIST,

CECIL WRAY.

"I was willing to consider, whether or no it might not be, that these men (the Roman party) were rather exasperated than persuaded,—and whether it were not that the severity of our laws against them might rather provoke their intemperate zeal, than religion thus move their settled conscience.

"It was a material consideration; because they ever did, and still do fill the world with outcries against our laws, for making a rape upon their consciences; having printed catalogues of their English martyrs;—drawn schemes of most strange tortures imposed on their Priests, such as were unimaginable by Nero, or Dioclesian, or any of the worst and cruellest enemies of Christianity, endeavouring thus to make us partly guilty of our ruin, and so washing their hands, in token of their own innocence, even then when they were dipping them in the blood royal, and would have emptied the best veins in the whole kingdom to fill their lavatory. But I found all these to be but calumnies, strong accusations upon weak presumptions, and that the cause did rest where I had begun, I mean, upon the pretence of the Catholic cause, and that the imagined iniquity of the laws of England could not be made a veil to cover the deformity of their intentions, for our laws were just, honourable, and religious."—BISHOP JER. TAYLOR, in the Epistle Dedicatory before his Sermon on the Gunpowder Treason.

THE MORAL CONSEQUENCES OF A FALSE FAITH.

"Deliver my soul, O LORD, from lying lips, and from a deceitful tongue."—Psalm cxx. 2.

It is hardly necessary to assure you, my brethren, that the service for the 5th of November has been this day omitted, simply because there is no sufficient authority for using it. The question of the legality of these services is so fully considered and ably argued in a work already recommended to your consideration, that I cannot do better than refer you to that volume* in our parochial library. The sum of the argument may be thus stated.

Our "Book of Common Prayer, Sacraments, and Offices," is binding upon Churchmen, and especially upon the ministers of religion, from having first received the authority and sanction of the *Church* in Convocation, as well as afterwards the ratification of the *State* in Parliament. As Parliament consists of King, Lords spiritual and temporal, and Commons, so Convocation is composed of King, Upper House of Bishops, and Lower House of Priests. The Sovereign is head or

^{*} The Original Services for the State Holidays, with Documents relating to the same; collected and arranged by the Hon. and Rev. A. P. Perceval, B.C.L., one of Her Majesty's chaplains.

supreme in both Convocation and Parliament, but he is not absolute. The Crown alone has no power to make ecclesiastical law. What is passed by Convocation is ratified by the Crown, which again receives the Royal assent on passing through Parliament. Now the Prayer Book was completed, and went through this process in 1661, and thus obtained the force both of ecclesiastical and statute law. In 1662 certain services (but not those now appended to our Prayer Book) were provided by Convocation with the Crown, but they were never submitted to Parliament, though the observance of certain days was ordered by that authority; and this may be supposed to give an indirect sanction to the three original services. But the point to be observed is, that no legal authority, either of Convocation or Parliament, can be shown for the four State Services now affixed by the printers to the Book of Common Prayer, these having no other sanction than the Royal Proclamation: and being essentially different from the original ones in several important particulars. Thus in the service for the 5th November, the Rubrics, Venite, Psalms, Prayers, and Gospel have all been altered, and another subject of commemoration introduced: for all which alterations and new subject matter, the Crown alone is answerable in the person of William III., who, like his predecessor James II., thought proper in these and other matters, to dispense with both the law of the Church and State.

Thus it appears, that, notwithstanding the order which accompanies the four services signed by the Minister of State, "their observance cannot be enforced, no authority being to be adduced in their behalf which would be deemed valid and sufficient in any court of the kingdom:" while to the observance of the ordinary service of the Prayer Book the Clergy are pledged by their ordination vows, by the Bishop's licence, and also by the Act of Uniformity.

It is on this account alone that we omit these State Services. Our disapproval of any portion of them would afford no sufficient excuse for passing them over.* It would ill be-

^{*} In the public worship at S. Martin's Church, and in all the occasional services, the directions of the Book of Common Prayer are implicitly obeyed, no addition, alteration, or curtailment being thought justifiable.

come us to set up our private judgment against the decision of the Church, or the laws of the land, and whenever these services receive the sanction of competent authority, we shall be ready to use them on all the appointed days.

But though I have not felt myself at liberty to set aside the ordinary services for the 20th Sunday after Trinity, I am not at all disposed to forego the grateful commemoration of the mercy which God so signally vouchsafed to our Church and nation in the wonderful discovery of that most subtle and barbarous plot for which this day is notorious in the annals of our country. Surely it is a day ever to be had in remembrance; for never before was so inhuman a conspiracy devised at the instigation of Satan, and under the cloak of religion, as this deliberate design to crush by one treacherous blow the whole assembled Parliament, the King, the Queen, the Prince, the Bishops, Nobles, and Commons, and involve them all in the same terrible destruction.

And I would have you observe, Brethren, as the most remarkable feature in this plot, and which it most concerns us to consider in this place, that it was *religious* zeal falsely directed, which was the root and spring of the whole conspiracy.

The English historian,* who is not less remarkable for his faithfulness to facts, than he is for his want of faith in revealed truth, speaks of this event as "one of the most memorable that history has conveyed to posterity,—and containing at once a singular proof both of the strength and weakness of the human mind: its widest departure from morals, and most steady attachment to religious prejudices." He states that "when they enlisted any new conspirator, in order to bind him to secresy, they always together with an oath, administered the communion, as the most sacred rite of their religion. And it is remarkable that no one of these pious devotees entertained the least compunction with regard to the cruel massacre which they projected, of whatever was great and eminent in the nation.† Some of them only were startled

^{*} Hume's History of England. Vol. iii. chap. 46.

[†] We have a remarkable proof that these traitors gloried in the deed, as in some great virtue, from the letter of one of them, Digby, to his wife,

with the reflection, that of necessity many of their own religion must be present, as spectators or attendants on the King, and as having seats in the House of Peers; but Tesmond, a Jesuit, and Garnet superior of that order in England, removed these scruples, and showed them how the interests of religion required that the innocent here should be sacrificed with the guilty."

The historian mentions that the parties who originated this infamous plot, were not men of bad character or desperate adventurers, but on the contrary men of worth and station, highly esteemed, and of irreproachable lives. was bigoted zeal alone, the most absurd of prejudices masked with religion, the most criminal of passions covered with the appearance of duty which seduced them into measures, that were fatal to themselves, and had so nearly proved fatal to their country." I give the very words of the historian, to prove the connection of this event with false religious views. not to adopt his definition of "bigoted zeal;" for religious zeal will ever be inexplicable to the infidel whether it appears persecuting the Church, as in Saul the unconverted, or as suffering persecution for the Cross of Christ, as in S. Paul the Christian Apostle. "It is good to be zealously affected always in a good cause," in the cause of truth, though the world may account us fools for our zeal. It is a very small matter what the world may think of Christian zeal; but it is of the utmost moment to every one who names the name of CHRIST, that his zeal be according to knowledge, -according to those holy, just and charitable, most gentle and forgiving principles which the Prince of Peace came to establish in the "By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another." † When our Lord's disciples would have called down fire from heaven to consume the Samaritans who refused to receive Him, He turned and rebuked them, saying "Ye know not what man-

after his condemnation, wherein he writes, "Now for my intention, let me tell you, that if I had thought there had been the least sin in the plot, I would not have been of it for all the world; and no other cause drew me to hazard my fortune and life, but zeal to God's religion."

^{*} Gal. iv. 18.

ner of spirit ye are of; for the Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives but to save them."*

On another occasion He set forth the principles of His religion thus. "I say unto you, Love your enemies; bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you."† And so His Apostles, when they were converted to the full knowledge of the Spirit of the Gospel use the same language; "Be ye kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you."‡

But oh, how different from the gentle temper of Christ, the open honesty of Truth, and the peaceful forbearance of the Gospel, was that cruel and deceitful, and murderous zeal, which, but for the merciful interposition of Providence, would have burnt up without pity or discrimination so many great and good men! How very far removed from God's Truth, and justice, and mercy must that religion be which could suggest and justify such conduct!

Surely the petition of our text rises to the lips when we contemplate the astounding perversion of sacred Truth which this history exhibits, when we consider that this most foul murder was to have been perpetrated under the sanction of the Holy Name of Christ,—"Deliver my soul, O Lord, from lying lips, and from a deceitful tongue."

For heavenly Truth must be converted into a lie, love and justice into deceit, before such dark and treacherous deeds can be plotted under cover of religion, and can dare to claim the authority of God. And this is the lesson which I design to draw from this anniversary, viz. that there is something fearfully wrong, something opposed to truth, honesty, and fair dealing, as well as contrary to tender mercy in the principles and policy of the Church of Rome.

This is a heavy charge to bring against any body of Christians, and the charge is not less weighty, because it is not our wont to indulge in frequent invectives, and indiscriminate abuse against the Church of Rome.

^{*} Luke ix. 54. † Matt. v. 44. ‡ Eph. iv. 32.

It is painful, very painful to reflect that any of the family of Christ, any of those, whom the Son of God has called into His vineyard, should turn His truth into a lie, and justify wholesale murder and rebellion on the score of religion. It behoves us to make such a charge very cautiously, as charitably as possible, remembering, too, that the hearts of all of us are naturally deceifful, and prone to effect what we deem right, often by very questionable means.

Surely the men who could resolve deliberately to commit so detestable a crime, are deserving our deepest commiseration. That the judgment and moral sense should be so wretchedly perverted as to imagine they were thus doing God service, is a phenomenon which ought to excite our unfeigned pity as well as astonishment, and our anxious search, lest, in a lesser degree, the same principle of evil may be lurking in disguise among ourselves. Let us extract this lesson also from our subject.

1. The charge, then, which we bring against the Church of Rome, or rather against that *Popery* which is identified with the later history of that Church, is not only that she has unintentionally perverted the truth and become corrupt, but that she does not reverence the truth, that she does not speak the truth, that it is in many instances her design and policy to conceal the truth. She does not supremely love the truth, and willingly make sacrifices for it, but she often deliberately "does evil that good may come;" loves a lie when it can forward her ends, nay, turns the truth of God itself into a lie, suppressing, concealing, denying the very doctrines of truth, when it is imagined that such conduct can promote the cause of her Church.

Observe, we do not bring this charge against all the individual members of that Church, God forbid! but against the system. Doubtless, the great majority of her members are altogether guiltless of designedly opposing or of concealing the truth. Doubtless, that Church has her thousands and her ten thousands as faithful believers, as devout and charitable, and as truth-loving as the members of the Anglican Church. As to the guilt of individuals, I believe they are rather to be regarded as sinned against than sinning; as

entangled in a system over which they have no control, as dragged at the wheels of a mighty engine, which is hurrying on to its destiny.

Even the chief performers in the false pageant which she enacts I believe often feel acutely the abject slavery and moral degradation of the part they have to play. From the humblest Jesuit to the Pope himself, there are many puppets who exhibit themselves reluctantly. But the maintenance of the clergy, the general safety of the Church, is made to sanction the evil, and the danger of interfering with established usages reconciles them to the deceit.

While, then, we protest, as a solemn duty, against the "blasphemous fables and dangerous deceits" of the Church of Rome, we do not "glory in the title of Protestants," for why should we glory in the shame of Christendom? why should we feel proud of a title which our Church has never adopted? how can we exult in the divisions of the family of Christ? how can we feel a satisfaction in saying, if it must be said, "Gop, I thank Thee that I am not as other men are?"

Not so. Let us speak ever humbly of ourselves, and charitably of others. Let us hope the best. And though we dare not but protest boldly and honestly against the grievous corruptions and most intolerable evils of Popery, let us hope that the Church of Rome is not yet "apostate" and irrecoverably lost, but that she may be restored at length, through our prayers, to the unity of the faith, and the bond of Catholic communion, and become with us one fold under one Shepherd.

It is quite beside my present purpose to enumerate the various doctrines in which the Church of Rome has departed from the truth, or the many practices in which she is open to the charge of deceit and falsehood. It must suffice generally to assert, in the words of the Twenty-second Article, that "the Romish doctrine concerning purgatory, pardons, worshipping and adoration, as well of images as of relics, and also invocation of saints, is a fond thing vainly invented, and grounded upon no warranty of Scripture, but rather repugnant to the Word of God."

I wish rather, on the present occasion, to show, that having

once abandoned the sacred light of God's TRUTH, as contained in Holy Scripture, rightly interpreted by Catholic antiquity, they have adopted a guide which has committed them in many instances to the most extravagant falsehoods, and most debasing morality. So that the practice of the Church of Rome cannot be defended, nor her popular religion justified, by any subtle disputations upon the above subjects of purgatory, pardons, &c.; and even if these could be proved to be Scriptural (which they cannot), still she would have to render an account for an endless variety of falsehoods and frauds, at once blasphemous and absurd, perpetrated under the name of religion at different places to this very day, if not with her direct sanction, at least with her tacit permission and acquiescence. So that the question resolves itself into this-not whether relics, for example, may be venerated, but whether notoriously false and pretended relics are to be palmed upon the people as true, and whether the people are to be permitted to offer to them an idolatrous adoration.

The question is not whether miracles are or are not within the present power of the Church of Christ, but whether such miracles as those which the Church of Rome exhibits periodically in some countries are not a disgrace to her system, and convict her of loving and making a lie.

So again, as regards her doctrines, the question is not whether she does not hold the great fundamental verities of the Gospel, but whether practically her people make these doctrines the foundations of their religion; whether they are taught to look to Jesus Christ and Him crucified alone for pardon, help, and salvation; or whether, on the contrary, they do not call upon the name of the Blessed Virgin as their most approachable saviour, and divine protector, and successful advocate.

The question is not so much how many Sacraments there are, but whether there are more than two ordained by Christ Himself as means of inward grace. It matters little how the two Sacraments of the Gospel are superseded, if they are superseded, and deprived of their proper position and prominency in the economy of grace:—whether their efficacy is openly denied, as it is by the Puritans and Dissenters, or

neutralized, by the bringing forward of other ordinances and ceremonies to a like prominency with them. This is the way of Rome, who has, among other additions to the faith, erected her Church into a sacrament of supereminent efficacy, just as some Protestants make the Bible alone (independently of its true meaning) the all-important means of grace in their religious system.

As it is the error of some heretics to deny the truth, so it has ever been the habit of the Romish Church to pervert the truth, and to exhibit some false image of it in its stead. Thus a reverence for the opinions of others, and a respect for authority, (both admirable virtues under proper limitations,) have degenerated into a slavish prostration of the reason, and an implicit faith in the judgment and doctrinal decrees of the living head of the Church of Rome.

The maxims of the order of the Jesuits exhibit this doctrine of implicit obedience to a human superior in the most extravagant degree; and it is from the awful results of these maxims that we form a just estimate of their character: "By their fruits ye shall know them,"—is not more the voice of Scripture than of common sense. And we may safely condemn those principles as Anti-Christian, which turn the truth of God into a lie, contradict the plainest dictates of reason and morality, and use the vilest means to compass the end in view.

The history connected with this day illustrates, in a very striking manner, the falseness of that religious system, which could suggest such a hecatomb of human sacrifices, and believe so atrocious a deed would be agreeable to the will of God, and the morality of the Gospel. "The dreadful secret, though communicated to above twenty persons, had been religiously kept, during the space of nearly a year and a half. No remorse, no pity, no fear of punishment, no hope of reward, had induced any one conspirator, either to abandon the enterprise, or make a discovery of it. The holy fury had extinguished in every breast every other motive."*

[.] Hume's History of England.

We are far from supposing, that this tragedy would have met with the individual approval of the majority of Roman Catholics, still the historian remarks, that, through bigotry, they were so devoted to Garnet, who was executed for this horrid crime, that "they fancied miracles to be wrought by his blood; and in Spain he was regarded as a martyr."

We are justified, therefore, in concluding that this execrable crime was the natural result of the doctrines inculcated by the Church of Rome. It was clearly not the hasty act of reckless and wily politicians, but the deliberate determination of religious men, plotting, as they conceived, for the glory of God, and the advancement of His kingdom. It was not the act of men taken by surprise, driven to desperation, or suddenly roused to violent action, as in mortal strife, but it was a conspiracy deeply laid, and maturely considered in all the circumstances of its terrible cruelty. Will it be said that the Church of Rome is not answerable for the acts of her individual members? This is a defence which may doubtless often be urged with justice in other cases, but not in this, unless it can be shown that these traitors acted as they did, not as members of that Church, but simply as bad citizens. But the reverse is notoriously the fact. For apart from their religion they were good men; and even in this affair, they acted conscientiously. But the light that should have guided them, led them astray. It was the principles of Rome, which perverted their minds, and hardened their hearts. it cannot be maintained that they misunderstood the principles of their Church,—that they acted unadvisedly :—for it was their own Clergy,-the Church's authorized instructors and advisers, who being privy to all the particulars of the intended murders, and associating with the conspirators, as their confessors, still not only did not reveal the plot, but did not even take steps to defeat its accomplishment, which might have been done without bringing the traitors to punishment.

Upon these Romish Priests, therefore, and through them, upon their Church, and its dangerous doctrines, rests the heaviest guilt of this transaction. And to say, that under circumstances, involving such momentous interests, they

were bound to silence by the seal of the confessional, only adds to the condemnation of the religion which is prepared to justify such an abuse.*

We must, therefore, conclude that the Pope's pretended right to dethrone kings, and to justify persecution, is no harmless theory, but a well understood claim, justifying, on occasion, wholesale assassination, superseding the commandment of Gop—"Thou shalt not kill," and giving rise to such events as the Gunpowder Plot, or massacre of St. Bartholomew's day, and the murders which are now so common in Ireland.

May we not, then, with justice, address our Roman Catholic brethren thus, Ye call yourselves Christians, and Gop forbid that we should call your Church Anti-Christ,-but this we say, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of;"-ye understand not the true spirit of the religion ve profess. The Gospel is not a cruel persecuting religion, but a religion of forgiveness and mercy. It delights not in treachery but in Truth. Yes; and so highly do we reverence Divine Truth, and so deeply do we love heavenly mercy, that we dare not, as Christians, deceive you with one falsehood, or perpetrate one base act, much less a cold-blooded murder, were it to save our entire Church from destruction. WE ARE SURE. AND MOST CONFIDENT that our Church is, notwithstanding our manifold sins and imperfections, A TRUE AND LIVING PART OF THE ONE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH; her succession is from the Apostles,-her faith is in the Holy Scriptures, which she holds aloft, as a witness of which she is not ashamed. And having this faith, we neither despair, nor are presumptuous. And of all presumption, none surely is so glaring, as that which would make God's Providence stand in need of man's violence to maintain His power and kingdom. Had we, therefore, the power to crush our adversaries. knowing what Spirit we are of, we may not retaliate, nor cease to show mercy.

The moderation and magnanimity displayed by King James in his speech to the Parliament on this event deserves to be recorded. He observed that "though religion had en-

[.] See Note at the end.

gaged the conspirators in so criminal an attempt, yet ought we not to involve all the Roman Catholics in the same guilt, or suppose them equally disposed to commit such horrible barbarities. Many holy men, he said, and our ancestors among the rest, had been seduced to concur with that Church in her scholastic doctrines, who yet had never admitted her seditious principles concerning the Pope's power of dethroning Kings, or sanctifying assassinations. The wrath of Heaven is denounced against crimes, but innocent error may obtain its favour, and nothing can be more hateful than the uncharitableness of the Puritans, who condemn alike to eternal torments, even the most inoffensive partisans of Popery."

- II. Having shown the extent to which Christian morality may be corrupted by the adoption of a false principle, I proceed now to exhibit the extravagant lengths to which the dogmatic teaching of the Church of Rome has been carried in a wrong direction by certain of her accredited emissaries. To this end, I will quote some articles from a confession of faith publicly propounded in Hungary about the year 1672 and prescribed to Protestants in Germany, upon their reception into Communion with Rome.
- "II. We confess that the Pope of Rome is Head of the Church and cannot err.
- "III. We confess, and are certain, that the Pope of Rome is vicar of Christ, and has plenary power of remitting and retaining the sins of all men according to his will, and of thrusting men down into hell.
- "IV. We confess that whatever new thing the Pope ordains, whether it be in Scripture, or not in Scripture, and whatever he commands is true, divine, and salvific, and therefore ought to be held by Lay-people in greater esteem than the precepts of the living God.
- "V. We confess that the most holy Pope ought to be honoured by all with Divine honour, with the greater genuflection due to Christ Himself.
 - "VI. We confess and assert that the Pope, as our most

^{*} See Dr. Wordsworth's "Letters to M. Gondon," 2nd Ed. p. 69, and "Sequel," pp. 182—219. Second Edition.

holy father, is to be obeyed by all men in all things, without any exception; and that such heretics as contravene his decrees are not only to be burnt without mercy, but to be delivered body and soul to hell.

- "VII. We confess that the reading of the Holy Scripture is the origin of heresy and schism, and the source of blasphemy.
- "XI. We confess that the Pope has the power of changing Scripture, and of adding to it, and taking from it, according to his will.
- "XIV. We confess and affirm that they who communicate under one kind receive the whole Christ, and that they who communicate under both kinds only enjoy and eat bare bread.
- "XVII. We confess that Mary the Blessed Virgin is worthy of greater honour from men and angels than Christ Himself, the Son of God.
- "XVIII. We confess that the Blessed Virgin Mary is Queen of heaven, and that her Son ought to act in all things according to her will.
- "XXI. We confess that Holy Scripture is imperfect, and a dead letter, until it is explained by the supreme Pontiff, and permitted by him to be read by the laity.
- "XXII. We swear also, as long as a drop of blood remains in our veins, we will prosecute that accursed Protestant doctrine, by all means in our power, secretly and openly, by violence and stratagem, by word and deed, even with the sword."

Such are the incredible depths of blasphemous error into which the human mind is betrayed when it departs from the ancient rule of faith,—SCRIPTURE interpreted by primitive tradition. "When the light in men is darkness"—when their religion is faulty inpr inciple—when that which should guide them leads them astray—"how great a darkness" will necessarily pervade what they think or do. When once it is believed to be a duty to shut the volume of truth from the people, how readily may the worst of crimes be made to assume the appearance of virtues, and the most monstrous dogmas be taught as the voice of God. True Catholic tradition is of inestimable value, but it must be kept in its proper place, used simply as the interpreter of Holy Scripture, and not

be set up as our guide in the stead of Scripture; otherwise it will at length become paramount to it, and in the end contradict it.*

I will now conclude, as a practical application of this subject, with suggesting the constant duty of self-examination, lest some of the root of bitterness, which is so odious in others, should perchance lurk in our own hearts. For "lying lips and a deceitful tongue" are not confined to the Church of Rome; there is a natural popery of the heart which clings more or less to us all.

We are, indeed, Gon be thanked, members of a Church which deals truly and faithfully with her people, which is not ashamed of the light of Gon's truth, which is not obliged, for her very maintenance, to uphold pious frauds, and garble her ancient records, and to alter the writings of the Fathers that they may give us false testimony in her favour.

Our maxim is "Magna est Veritas et prævalebit." As a nation we boast of our honour, honesty, and open dealing in matters of religion, as in all other things. We reverence Divine Truth, and would sacrifice everything to it.

Let us then be consistent. If our Church is a pure and Apostolic branch of the Church Catholic, then let us embrace her system fully and unreservedly; not treating the Prayer Book as the Romanists treat the Bible, suppressing, misinterpreting, altering the text to suit their purpose; nor

* As might be expected, the Romanists show an anxiety to disclaim this Hungarian Confession, and accordingly its genuineness is denied by the Dublin Review, which affects to consider it a "satirical composition of a Protestant." Certainly it is little suited to the English taste of the nineteenth century. But no proof is produced of its being a forgery, and Dr. Wordsworth has brought forward another confession, the Silesian, published fifty years earlier, containing propositions equally repulsive. While we should be very sorry to believe that the English Roman Catholics of the present day adopt the precise statements of this Hungarian Confession, we must maintain that the Church of Rome, on her boasted principle of unity, is at least indirectly responsible for this form, inasmuch as it was drawn up by her accredited agents, the Jesuits. If this Confession can be shown among the list of heretical books which the Church of Rome has condemned, we shall be sincerely rejoiced to acquit her of being responsible for the above extravagant dogmas.

preferring the XXXIX Articles, as a test of doctrine, to the more ancient offices and Sacramental Services, as the Romanists prefer modern to ancient tradition; but honestly accepting every portion of our Liturgy with all its doctrines, as that of Baptism, Absolution, the real Presence in the Eucharist, and whatever else has been handed down to us as the "faith once delivered to the Saints." For there is a spurious religion, the opposite extreme from Romanism, which it greatly resembles,—there is a Puritanism within the fold equally foreign to sound Catholicism, which would undermine the true principles of the Church of England.

It may be well to bear in mind the points of resemblance between these two extremes.

- 1. While Romanism asserts the infallibility of the Pope, Puritanism makes each man a Pope to himself, by denying Church authority, and asserting the right of unlimited private judgment.
- 2. Romanism misquotes Scripture for self-interest, and Puritanism does the like.
- 3. Romanism supersedes Scripture by wresting it to an agreement with her modern decrees:

Puritanism supersedes Scripture by forcing it into an accordance with the traditions of Calvin, Luther, &c.

4. Romanism professes great reverence for antiquity; but really refuses the appeal to it:

Puritanism rejects the idea altogether. Thus antiquity is equally opposed to both.

5. Romanism asserts absolute authority:

Puritanism exercises it when she can.

- 6. As Rome denies salvation to all but its adherents; so the Puritans claim to be the only elect and saints of God.
- 7. Both Romanism and Puritanism (I have remarked) depreciate the value of the two Sacraments.
- 8. Both, also, hold the doctrine of intention; the one makes the grace of Baptism depend upon the right-feeling of the Priest, the other upon the intention or faith of the parents.
 - 9. Romanism trifles with Truth:

Nor can the veracity of Puritanism be trusted when its in-

terests can be promoted by falsehood. Thus both practise a mental reservation: or justify the doing of evil for a prospective good.

- 10. The Church of Rome can absolve from the obligation of an oath: and a Puritanical conscience is often equally complying.
- 11. Romanism is condemned for her bigoted intolerance: But Puritanism is not a whit more tolerant of the conscientious scruples of others.
 - 12. The Pope is considered infallible by the Romanists: Calvin and Luther are infallible with the Puritans.
- 13. But while the Puritans are loud in condemning the morality of Rome;

They forget that their favourite Luther gave a dispensation for adultery and polygamy in the case of the Landgrave of Hesse.*

14. And while they inveigh against the cruelty of punishing heretics with sword and faggot;

They forget that Calvin burnt Servetus alive for his conscientious scruples.

- The Landgrave of Hesse, the powerful Patron of the Protestants, desired permission to have a concubine under the title of a lawful wife, although his real wife was still living. To which the famous Reformers Luther, Melancthon, and Bucer acceded, so that it was done secretly, and none but a few trusty friends were informed of the matter, who should be obliged to secresy under the seal of confession. This loose morality of Luther appears to be the consequence of his view of the doctrine of Grace; for we find him writing to Melancthon in the following strain: "as a preacher of grace, preach a real not a sham grace: and if grace is real, bear about thee not a sham but a real sin. God saves not sham sinners: be a sinner, and sin stoutly (pecca fortiter); trust but the more strongly and rejoice in Christ, the conqueror of sin, death, and the world. . . . From Him sin will not separate us, though we commit whoredom and murder a thousand thousand times in one day!!" See Notes to "Five Sermons on the Nature of Christianity, by W. H. Mill, D.D., Christian Advocate, preached before the University of Cambridge in 1846," in which the antinomianism of Luther's theology is ably exposed. See also Dr. Hook's Eccl. Biog. Life of Bucer.
- † Servetus was burnt for adopting the Reformers' impossible principle of "the Bible and the Bible alone," but with it his own Sociaian, instead of the Church's traditionary interpretation of it.

15. The Papists intended to murder their King:

The Puritans did actually accomplish the murder of their King (Charles) and Archbishop.

Be it our care, then, brethren, to hold faithfully that true middle course which our Church prescribes, and at the same time, let us aim at the strictest veracity in all that we say or do, shunning deceit and lies, not only as odious and dishonourable in the Christian, but regarding truth-telling as essential for the maintenance of that self-respect which is necessary to the character of the honest and upright man.

Let it then be our prayer in reference to ourselves as well as others, "Lord, deliver my soul from lying lips, and from a deceitful tongue."

"Lying lips" are not only hateful before men, but abominable in the sight of God; and however lightly the world may judge of the petty deceits, and conventional falsehoods in which it is wont to indulge, we know who is the father of lies, and the terrible punishment which God has denounced against those addicted to this sin, viz., that "all liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone."*

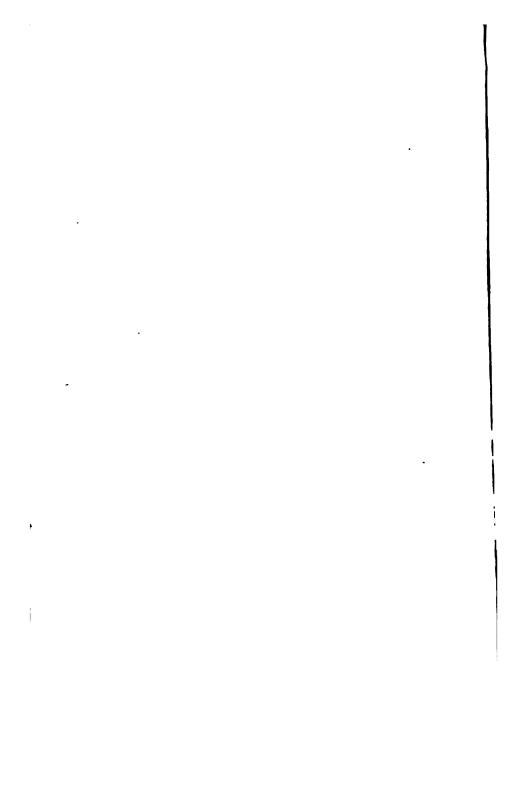
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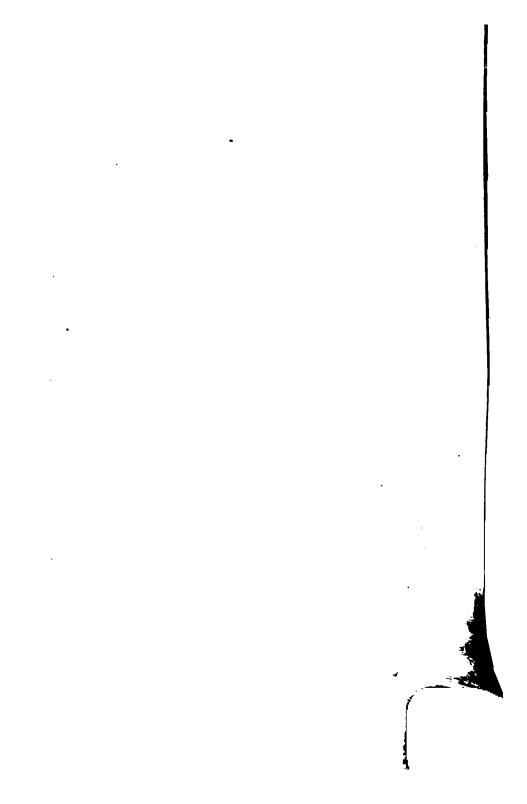
The Roman Catholic historian, Lingard, in his account of this transaction, labours to remove from Garnet the guilt of participation in this conspiracy, as compromising the character of his Church; but quite enough is admitted to implicate the Church of Rome most deeply. Garnet, Gerard, and Greenway, were Jesuit priests, Garnet being the Provincial of that order in England. They were all intimate with the conspirators. Gerard administered to them the sacrament, "to perform their vow and oath of secresy, and to execute the plot" (Winter's confession), though it is pretended that he was not acquainted with the circumstances of it. Greenway became acquainted with the particulars, and he again communicated it to Garnet, his superior. These two last, at all events, admitted

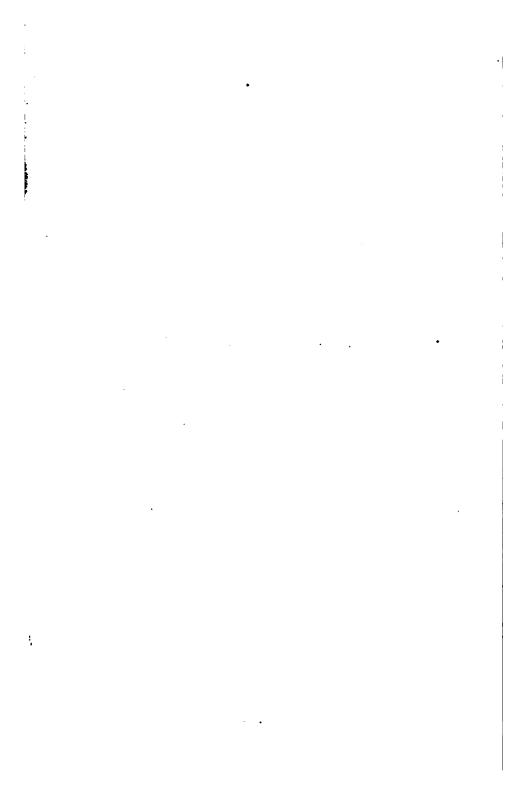
that they were privy to the design of blowing up the Parliament; and yet they took no measures to defeat the plot. Their excuse was that they were by their religion pledged to secresy, because it had been revealed to them in sacramental confession. But Bishop Jeremy Taylor denies that such a treason could be "propounded to their fathers as a thing subjectable to their penitential judicature, because it was a fact not repented of, but then in agitation, and resolved upon for the future. How then could this be a confession? A confession must certainly be in order to absolution: and this was a business of which they could not expect to be absolved, unless they hoped to sin with a pardon about their necks."-Sermon on the 5th Nov. One thing is clear, that this dreadful secret was intrusted to the confidence of the clergy of the Church of Rome by those whose religious instructors and guides they were; and though they might have peremptorily forbidden the procedure, or found a hundred ways of defeating the accomplishment of the plot, without compromising the authors of it, they did neither of these things. A gentle remonstrance seems to have been urged, for decency's sake, by Garnet, which was, however, quietly disposed of by the facetious comment of Catesby upon the Bull of Clement VIII. For whereas that document enjoined the English Catholics to "hinder with all their power any but a Catholic coming in to the throne;" and Garnet was accordingly disposed to consult the Pope's mind in this business of the plot; Catesby ingeniously eased him of the trouble of sending to Rome, saying that the Pope's mind was clear, "for since he commanded our endeavour to hinder him (a protestant king) from coming in, he is willing enough that we should throw him out." Such is the casuistry of Rome, and so light in the balance are the souls and bodies of men, when weighed against the interests of that Church.

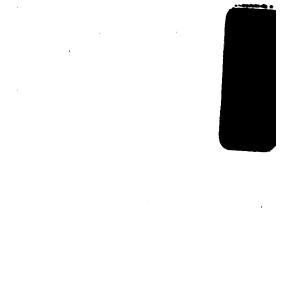
"The Church of England," as Bp. Jeremy Taylor remarks, "observes the seal of confession, as sacredly as reason or religion can possibly permit, yet forbids not disclosure, in case of murder or treason, but, in these particulars, leaves us entire in our obedience to the common laws of England; and these command it."

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